

The Dragon

#37
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p, up and away in May! That's the catch-phrase for issue #37 of *The Dragon*. In addition to going up in quality and content with still more new features this month, *TD* has gone up in another way: the price. As observant subscribers, or those of you who bought this issue in a store, will have already noticed, we're now asking \$3 for *TD*. From now on, the magazine will cost that much whenever we

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**If your mailing label says TD 37
this is your last issue. . .resubscribe**

feature a module, a special inclusion, or some other out-of-the-ordinary ingredient. It's still a bargain when you stop to think that a regular commercial module, purchased separately, would cost even more than that—and for your three bucks, you're getting a whole lot of magazine besides. It should be pointed out that subscribers can still get a year's worth of *TD* for only \$2 per issue. Hint, hint . . .

And now, on to the good news. This month's kaleidoscopic cover comes to us from the talented **Darlene Pekul**, and serves as your first look at "**Jasmine**," Darlene's fantasy adventure strip, which makes its debut in this issue. The story she's unfolding promises to be a good one; stay tuned.

Holding down the middle of the magazine is **The Pit of The Oracle**, an AD&D game module created by **Stephen Sullivan**. It was the second-place winner in the first International Dungeon Design Competition, and after looking it over and playing through it, we think you'll understand why it placed so high. Also helping to make May a special month is **Mapping the Dungeons II Update**, the last word (for now) in our ongoing search for players and DMs the world over.

In another debut, we're opening up **Eye of The Dragon**, a look at what's happening now and what the future holds in the game-hobby industry—another big step in the right direction, as *TD* strives to cover all aspects of gaming and the people involved in it.

Instead of one main feature this month, we have three. **From the City of Brass to Dead Orc Pass** is **Ed Greenwood's** literary look at the use of gates to move from plane to plane. If you'd rather stay right where you are and battle some new dragons, then **Arthur Collins' article** will fill the bill. Or, if a more "civilized" campaign is your cup of tea, **Jeff Swycaffer** and **Paul Leathers** present ways to make an urban atmosphere more exciting.

There are the usual batch of regular columns inside, led off by **Gary Gygax's** glimpse at the soon-to-be-released (yes, really!) World of Greyhawk in **From the Sorcerer's Scroll**. Just in time for Origins '80, **John Prados** looks at the Charles Roberts Awards in his **Simulation Corner**. Instead of more **Giants in the Earth** this month, **Lawrence Schick** and **Tom Moldvay** provide a look at how their offerings are prepared. **Lenard Lakofka** presents The Monties, certainly an ungodly group of deities, in **Leomund's Tiny Hut**. *Divine Right* designer **G. Arthur Rahman** continues the Minarian Legends with an examination of **Elfland**. **Jean Wells** has more answers to your questions in **Sage Advice**. **Fantasysmith's Miniature Spotlight** takes a short look at the long lance, and **Kristan Wheaton goes Up On A Soapbox** with a thesis on the theory of magic. A trio of new treasures awaits you in **Bazaar of the Bizarre**, and the **Vulturehound** is lurking in **Dragon's Bestiary**.

And there's more! **Bryan Bullinger** offers number two in his series of *Squad Leader* scenarios. **Tim Jones** shows how hard he thinks it ought to be to develop a new magic spell. **Colleen Bishop** presents an appropriate companion piece on Libraries, and **F. C. MacKnight** describes a complex combat system for his hybrid game based on *Lankhmar*. **Nick Nascati** takes us back in the past once again with another installment of **Armies of the Renaissance**.

In the "broken promise" department, we should say that the rules for the second International Dungeon Design Competition are *not* to be found in these pages. We're doing a facelift on the contest which has proven to be more complicated than we originally imagined—so, rather than make some hasty decisions just to keep the promise we made last month, we'll beg your indulgence for another month. If we can't do it right, we'd rather not do it at all. Okay? Okay! Now, start reading!— *Kim*



By the time you read this, many of you will probably have already learned of the departure of Tim Kask from TSR and THE DRAGON. To squelch any rumors and hearsay, let me give you the straight scoop: Tim, after more than four years at TSR (he was the first person hired when the company was formed) has resigned. The reasons for his resignation are his own, but as his friend and as the person now taking his place within TSR Periodicals, I know that the decision was not an easy one. I, too, hear the siren song of mainstream publishing, yet am bound somehow, by forces I myself do not fully comprehend, to this fledgling creature, THE DRAGON. Tim brought the magazine to where it is today, and I will continue to nurture its growth, but he will be sorely missed.

* * *

We have a new addition to the editorial staff this month, in the form of Bryce "B.A." Knorr. Bryce hails most recently from Vero Beach, Florida, and brings another seven years of journalism experience to our staff. His primary function will be assisting Man of Many Talents Mohan in the production of THE DRAGON. Another recent addition to the TSR Periodicals staff is secretary/receptionist Cherie Knoll, late of the TSR Hobbies shipping department. Let's have a nice round of applause for the new kids on the block!

* * *

One final word. We've been receiving a number of letters lately, and seeing editorials in other gaming magazines, questioning why THE DRAGON devotes so much space to *D&D* and *AD&D*, and implying that THE DRAGON is some sort of house organ for TSR Hobbies, Inc. Most disturbing is the implication that TSR Hobbies somehow pumps money into THE DRAGON and TSR Periodicals to keep us going. Wrong! Erroneous! Not true! (I sometimes wish it were—it'd make things a lot easier.) TSR Periodicals may be part of TSR Hobbies, Inc., as far as the corporate structure, but we are an entirely independent operation. We have our own offices, bank account, dealers and distributors, shipping operations, etc., etc., etc. TSR Periodicals operates as a separate business from TSR Hobbies, Inc. They pay for advertising space, just like anyone else, and if we want a set of *AD&D* books to use for reference here in the office, we pay for them. And the day we start spending more

money than we make is the day we close our door, just like any other business.

Now, as to the allocation of space for articles in THE DRAGON, again, finance enters into the picture. Obviously, the way to sell the most magazines is to provide subject matter that appeals to the most people. *D&D* and *AD&D* are the hottest-selling games on the market at this time, so we devote a lot of space to them. *Traveller*, for example, is another very popular game, and we ran five *Traveller* articles in the March magazine. The company that produces the game has no bearing on whether or not we devote space to the game—the game's popularity does.

Popularity of a game discussed in an article, however, is not the only criterion by which we select material. *Runequest* and *Tunnels & Trolls* are examples of a couple of other popular role-playing games, but you won't find articles about them in THE DRAGON. Why? Because *we just plain don't have any!* 95% of all our material is submitted by freelance writers, and for some reason, no one bothers to submit *RQ* or *T&T* articles to us. We can't print what we don't have. It's as simple as that. Not that we would necessarily print just any *RQ* or *T&T* article we might receive; we would, of course, apply our usual criteria for quality and clarity of writing. But at least we'd have a choice.

Other game magazines may make it a point of covering only one game or line of games. Fine, that's *their* choice. But the average gamer doesn't play just one game or line of games, and limiting the subject matter of a publication in that manner seems to me to be limiting the readership such a publication could hope to reach. And the poor gamer is stuck with the decision of which magazine covering which game line he wishes to buy, or is forced to buy them all. Not so with THE DRAGON. While we will never be all things to all gamers, we will continue to to bring you informative and entertaining material on as many aspects of games and gaming as possible—maybe not in one single issue, but over the long haul, we should have a fairly representative sampling, subject to the criteria listed above. And in the end, it will be you, the reader, who is the judge.

Jake

The Dragon

The Premier Magazine
of Games and Gaming

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Realism 101

Dear Editor:

I believe you misconstrued the nature of my comments about realism in my letter to *Out On A Limb* in TD #35. I was not saying that the melee system in my proposed game is more "real(istic)" than that of *AD&D*. My comments were aimed at Mr. Stenseth's criticism of my Strength Comparison Table as being unrealistic. I was trying to point out that FRPG's are inherently unrealistic and the FRPG designers have to do the best they can under the circumstances.

Your sensitivity to comments about realism is understandable, though. My hackles go up for exactly the same reasons. Most people use "realism" in a loose fashion and do not distinguish between what Richard Berg called "Perceived Realism" and "Actual Realism" in his Forward Observer column in *SPI's MOVES* magazine. Mr. Berg used the terms in a pejorative fashion and I prefer to define them as "Subjective" and "Objective" realism because each is an essential element of game design.

Objective realism is generally that background information worked into a game which is objectively quantifiable or generally agreed upon as being or having been the true state of affairs. Subjective realism means those details that the players of a game *perceive* as being realistic, whether or not they are objectively realistic. If the subjective realism is also objectively realistic, so much the better.

Fantasy games and science-fiction games are unique in that their designers are allowed to create their own "objective reality" within certain limits. This is commonly known as the process of world-creation. My own term for it is "game reality." Game reality differs from objective reality in that the designer has either altered certain natural laws (or created new ones), or altered historical reality (sometimes extrapolating upon existing history), or sometimes both, as in *TSR's Gamma World*.

It has been my experience that any alteration by a game designer of historical reality and/or natural laws, to create his own "game reality," must be handled very carefully. Otherwise, the divergence from objective reality will develop a snowballing (positive feedback) effect in which the logical implications and side effects of the initial alterations will necessarily entail still more divergences, and greater ones, until the whole thing spirals out of control and the game is a shambles. It is therefore necessary when creating "game reality" to have a precise and limited game effect in mind and to have a high degree of intellectual honesty and ruthlessness in weeding out concepts that threaten to snowball or threaten other elements of the game.

One of the chief methods used to deal with problems of this sort is the application of a special rule to minimize the adverse side effects of a particular element of game reality. Two problems tend to crop up with this response. A proliferation of special rules to compensate for

fundamental defects in design is a good way to make an otherwise adequate game unplayable. The other common problem is that special rules are inherently arbitrary, and the use of them to minimize flaws in other rules is often perceived by the players as being unfair. Then they ignore the special rules they don't like.

Special rules are best used to add some interesting details, commonly called "chrome," to a game and they are quite useful in that form though fantasy game designers tend to overdo it. There will be time, however, when a FRPG designer has no choice but to use a special rule as a "quick fix" for an inherent design flaw.

The respect players have for this sort of "quick fix" will depend in large measure on the degree to which the designer has been fair and consistent in the creation of his "game reality." All FRPGs employ arbitrary rules and conventions to deal with the fantasy elements. Arbitrary lines have to be drawn somewhere between what is allowable and what isn't. If one of these unavoidable arbitrary rules and/or conventions coincides with a "quick fix" special rule, the players will often think that the designer is cheating and they will ignore the special rule. This will vary from game to game depending on the type of players a game attracts. *D&D* players are an unruly and fractious lot, while *Runequest* types are more respectful of authority. Gary Gygax may seem a bit testy, but he has good reasons.

I cannot emphasize enough that "realism" is an irrelevant term when dealing with FRPGs. Designers create their own reality with such games, and a better test is how true the designer has been to the alternative reality set forth in his game.

Tom Holsinger—Turlock, CA

Realism 102

Dear Jake,

In the letter column of TD #35, you asked a very good question: "There seems to be some sort of movement towards 'realism' (whatever that means) in fantasy role-playing game rules. Why?" You expressed the opinion that fantasy gaming consists of playing out actions that are impossible in reality, and that therefore attempts to be realistic in writing rules for such gaming are doomed to failure. While I agree in part, I think you have missed the point.

Granted, certain things cannot exist exactly as they are portrayed in myth, such as the giants whose expanded scale is not possible, at least for creatures like you and me made of ordinary flesh and bone. Granted, magic doesn't work in our world, at least not as dependably as technology. Does this make an attempt at realism impossible?

No, it does not. Fantasy gaming at its best allows the gamer to participate in living through a fantasy story, and for that reason some of the rules that apply to story writing apply to fantasy gaming. One of these is the necessity of main-

taining in the reader or gamer the "willing suspension of disbelief" that allows one to accept the premises of the situation in order to enjoy the story. Ursula K le Guin recently put this very well in a book review in *The Washington Post's Book World*, page five, on March 23, 1980: "Effective works of fantasy are distinguished by their often relentless accuracy of detail, by their exactness of imagination, by the coherence and integrity of their imagined world—by, precisely, their paradoxical truthfulness. . . . An infallible sign of amateur or careless fantasy writing is the blurred detail, the fudged artifact, the stupid anachronism that proclaims, 'This is just a fantasy, folks, so it doesn't really matter.' It matters more in fantasy than anywhere else, since in fantasy we stand on no common mundane ground, but have only the fantasist to trust. . . If he lets us down—pffft." The success of the author to convince us that everything else is true to life is a necessary element in storytelling, for without it we will not be willing to take the next step and believe the fantastic parts of the story, be it magic spells, monsters, or whatever.

When someone writes that part of the rules to a fantasy game are "unrealistic," what the underlying complaint comes down to is that the rules do not allow the user to move freely through the fantasy. If you are constantly being startled by false details that shock you into stopping and asking, "Does it really work that way?" then the game designer has not done a good job on that rule. This is why I find the expression that "It's just a fantasy" so exasperating when it is used to explain part of a game—it shows that the person who falls back on that excuse does not understand the essence of the subject. The ideal set of rules would allow the gamer to feel the armor on the character's body and the bite of the sword, the smell of sweat and the pounding of the blood as you race up the hill. Realism of any sort is the kind of detail that helps convince you that the story you are in is truthful in its essence, even if the details are not true to what we think of as the real world. Fantasy, to be successful, must be taken seriously by all concerned designer, GM, and gamer. So I hope you will try to show a bit more sympathy to the poor souls who write you asking for more realism in their games, for their complaint is not frivolous.

Of course, it is impossible to completely simulate every detail of real life in a game. You would be flooded with more data than you could handle, or would ever want to. But game rules can be written in such a way as to aid the gamer instead of presenting roadblocks to enjoyment. I would like to see more effort put into writing rules in two parts, the basic mechanics of play plus an explanation of what the designer was trying to simulate with that rule. This would get the gamer to thinking about what's happening in the game instead of worrying so much about mechanics, and should help with that "willing suspension of disbelief."

John T. Sapienza, Jr —Washington, D.C.

Semantics 201

I seemed to have opened a can of worms with my reply to Mr. Holsinger's letter in TD #35 regarding realism in fantasy role-playing. Perhaps I should have been a bit more detailed in my reply.

Both Mr. Holsinger and Mr Sapienza feel I missed the point of the letter—perhaps so, but Mr. Holsinger's original letter used phrases such
(Turn to page 45)

...In one small step

The theory and use of gates

Ed Greenwood

Elric looked at the pit. It was ragged and deep and the earth in it seemed freshly turned as if it had been but lately dug.

"What must we wait for, Friend Corum?"

"For the Tower," said Prince Corum. "I would guess that this is where it appears when it is in this plane."

"And when will it appear?"

"At no particular time. We must wait. And then, as soon as we see it, we must rush it and attempt to enter before it vanishes again, moving on to the next plane."

—Michael Moorcock,
The Vanishing Tower.

The plane-shifting Vanishing Tower of Moorcock's Eternal Champion series is only one of the many fascinating means of travelling between worlds found in SF and fantasy literature. These "gates" (as they are most often called) are ideal for use in AD&D campaigns,

the new plane (referring to Zelazny again, consider that the only explosive that worked in Amber was not gunpowder, but jeweller's rouge).

Gates can also be used to combine the campaigns of various DMs, either by direct gate link, or by providing a "common ground"; an area, like Michael Moorcock's Tanelorn, which exists in all planes. And "since Tanelorn exists in all planes at all times it is easier for a man who dwells there to pass between the planes, discover the particular one he seeks."¹ An obvious choice for such a city would be a commercial module or playing aid, such as Judges Guild's *City-State of the Invincible Overlord*.

Various game systems (*D&D*, *MA*, *GW*, *Traveller* and *Boot Hill*, to name a few) could be combined (refer to the *DMG* and Jim Ward's article in *TD* -18 for the details of meshing rules and statistics) by gates linking one game setting (i.e. The Old West) to another (Camelot—why not? Well, I'll wait until the Knights of the Round Table—and Merlin—appear in *Giants In The Earth*; hint, hint).

The idea could also be adapted to Traveller or other SF games, operating in the manner of Larry Niven's matter transmission booths or James H. Schmitz's subspace portals.² Gates have an advantage over the Amulet of the Planes, which can force the DM to create, in depth, any one of 21 to 24 planes at the roll of a die. The problems this or similar means of transport (such as cursed scrolls or ancient grimoires—cf. Codex of the Infinite Planes) can produce are obvious (for an example, see the introduction to Gary Gygax's *Faceless Men And*



serving as means of moving between the various Known Planes of Existence.

Besides providing a means of taking players into new areas or settings (often regardless of their wishes), gates have the added advantage of allowing the DM to introduce NPCs not otherwise consistent with his or her world, by providing a plausible way of getting them there.

Thus, characters from other D&D campaigns or famed in fantastic literature (such as those detailed in the series *Giants In The Earth* in *The Dragon*), or even the occasional modern-day GI or superhero comic-book character (say, one of the Marvel X-Men) can take their bows. Such characters (used with extreme moderation!) can provide both comic relief and interesting player tests. A Prince of Amber or Chaos from Roger Zelazny's Amber series, for example, could hellride an unwilling player character to a new plane and leave him there with little chance of returning, as Corwin did to Ganelon. Handle the prince as a high-level psionic and the "hellride" as the discipline *probability travel*.

Gates also provide a means of shifting characters into a new, prepared setting when the DM is changing campaigns—i.e. from *D&D* to *AD&D*, or when one campaign has gotten out of hand and a fresh start is desired, without placing long-played characters into limbo forever. To cut down on artifacts, *et cetera*, the DM merely has them fail to work in

Clockwork Monsters in *TD* -17). Foreknowledge (and preparation) of the players' destination avoids frantic dice-rolling a step ahead of the exploring party ("ahh . . . you see—um . . . a range of mountains in the distance, and—ahh . . . a—a band of orcs twenty feet from you there are—ahh, fifteen of them"; frantic rolling of hit points, etc., rapid onset of nervous breakdown on the poor DM's part, not to mention the players'). A Cubic Gate or Well of Many Worlds is much better, but often the DM does not wish the players to control such items.

In its most common form, the Gate is merely a space between two standing stones. It may be of three basic types: those which operate constantly; those which must be triggered by the use of a spell, talisman, mechanical process, or word; and those which operate periodically (often in accordance with stellar configurations, phases of the moon, or solstices—such as Midsummer Night—and equinoxes) regardless of the presence or absence of travellers. Typically, gates are both ancient (locations and working almost forgotten, or distorted by legend) and well-nigh indestructible. If they are destroyed, it is usually with an explosion of awesome intensity. Occasionally they are clearly the work of superior (usually lost) technology, and may have safeguards and traps built into the controls.

DMs will find much of interest and usefulness in fantasy and science

fiction works, and this is as true for gates as it is for monsters or magic. Some contain concepts ideal for use by the DM. The Vanishing Tower is perhaps the most spectacular of these. It is a small stone castle, sections of which appear shadowy and vague. Lights play about its battlements. It flickers from one plane to another, spending only minutes or at the most a few hours at any location. There should be a warning flicker just before it shifts (the DM should count to ten, quickly, before shifting the tower). The shift should be more or less instantaneous and under the directional control of no person or entity (this will prevent players from making it a cheap means of all-powerful transportation, or worse, a well-nigh unassailable fortress which can shift away to escape danger in any one plane). The only exception to this lack of player control is the provision (by means of a *Limited* (or *Full*) *Wish* spell) for forcing the tower away from the plane of the spell caster. The spell caster should have no knowledge of, nor control over, its new destination when driven away. The DM, however, should know (and resist the temptation to change) the tower's destinations and the occasions on which it shifts. When using either the Tower or the Ship (see below) a chart should be drawn up showing the circuit of planes travelled through. Dice can determine the length of time spent in each plane.

In Moorcock's novels, the "ordinary laws of sorcery"³ do not work within the tower due to the rapidity of its shifting and the varying effectiveness of magic from plane to plane, but individual DMs must make their own decisions. It is suggested that psionics and the following

fearful to leave, but very lonely, he captured those who entered the tower and forced them to be his companions until he grew tired of them and killed them. He had a number of winged, monstrous servants (seemingly equivalent to gargoyles) who could be harmed only by the scythes they bore. Like the monster in *Wormy*, TD -18 and 19, these were initially imprisoned within balls which the dwarf would throw at those menacing him. In the depths of the tower was a vault filled with the treasure of all those who had ventured into the tower and fallen prey to Ghagnasdiak. Such a hoard would include many strange artifacts (perhaps *Gamma World* weapons and armor) and much magical treasure. In the original novel, one such artifact was the Runestaff, which apparently has the power to halt the tower's shifting (although it was never so used). It can itself shift its holder and anyone touching him or her to any plane desired—whereupon it will vanish.

The Ship That Sails The Seas of Fate is also of Moorcock's invention. It is a ship of dark and strange design, with a curving, warlike prow, ornately carved rails and figurehead, elevated decks fore and aft. With a tireless crew of two, a blind captain and his twin the steersman, it sails through the planes on an apparently foreordained route. As the captain tells Elric, "We'll sight land shortly. If you would disembark and seek your own world, I should advise you do so now. This is the closest we shall ever come again to your plane."⁴ Always shrouded in mist, the Dark Ship seems to spend much of its time in the astral plane, en route from a sea in one plane to another sea in the next, rather than shifting



spells not work within the tower, or through its walls from inside or out: *Chariot of Sustarre*, *Contact Other Plane*, *Control Weather* (and similar spells), *Dimension Door*, *Drawmij's Instant Summons*, *Gate*, *Locate Object*, *Passwall*, *Plane Shift*, *Stone Tell*, *Teleport*, *Wizard Eye* (and related 'spy' spells), *Word of Recall*. It is a matter of choice whether a Magic-User within the tower should be permitted to recall a *Leomund's Tiny Chest*.

The tower generally enters any given plane in relatively the same spot (see opening quotation) each time. Note that this is by no means certain, and the irregularity of its presence (coupled with the length of absence) will in most planes deny precise knowledge (and perhaps guarding) of its point of entry. Often only old, distorted legends and crumbling, forgotten records will hint at where it may be found when it does appear.

Often the tower will be inhabited by creatures venturing into it from the various planes it visits (for example, if the Tower has visited any of the Nine Hells at all recently, it will certainly have been garrisoned; one might assume the archdevils have given standing orders regarding this). Monster possibilities are obvious.

In the original, a dwarf named Voilodon Ghagnasdiak inhabited the tower (after discovering its plane-shifting properties the hard way). Too

instantaneously as the Tower does.

The *magnum opus* of gate systems is Philip Jose Farmer's five-volume *World of Tiers* series.⁵ Gates therein are of many types, most commonly doorframes or hoops, or matching crescents (which must be joined to activate the gate) or seemingly indestructible metal. Passage through them is so instantaneous that one may step through an open doorway and be gated into another room (identical to the one the door physically opens into) without realizing it. Air passes through the gates automatically, to prevent the 'pop' of air rushing into a sudden vacuum as someone vanishes. Gate fields can cut anything, and are used (at various points in the series) to neatly carve up huge rocks, trees, and enemies of various sorts.

Gates may be portable, or partly so (one crescent set into a floor or boulder, often concealed, and the other loose, usually hidden elsewhere). Gates may be set to allow passage of masses up to a certain maximum; thus, men or large animals can be kept out. Gates are usually found in pairs (that is, entry and exit, or vice versa) which share the same "resonant frequency." Such a frequency may be changed by the use of sophisticated machinery to turn the gates off (perhaps cutting someone in half!) or align them with other gates, changing the destination any

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That's not in the Monster Manual!

Neutral dragons: Six new challenges for powerful players

Arthur W. Collins

Taxonomic types have no doubt noticed that the dragons in the AD&D *Monster Manual* are easily separated into two types: Colored dragons, ruled by Tiamat, the Chromatic Dragon (evil); and Metallic dragons, ruled by Bahamut, the Platinum Dragon (good). And a very well-balanced and fascinating assortment of beasts they are. So why am I about to propose six new types of dragons?

Part of the problem is with alignment. How come there are no *neutral* dragons? Surely there must be a place for the occasional dragon who doesn't give a hoot about good or evil as long as people

leave his treasure alone. Likewise, half of these fascinating creatures are of good alignment, which really cuts down on the pillage an adventurer of basically good alignment can attempt without incurring the wrath of the gods (or at least the DM).

Another part of the problem is that everyone and his brother has a *Monster Manual*, which cuts down on the DM's options to surprise his adventurers with something that they have to think about to deal with successfully. It's very frustrating to be graphically describing an unknown beast a party has encountered, only to have some encyclopedic fanatic quote you chapter and verse on what it is, and what all of its abilities are. Finally, there is just something fascinating about

dragons, which leads us to explore new variations simply to enjoy the essence of dragon-ness.

In proposing this new breed of dragon, I am assuming that all these types conform to the characteristics of dragons in general, except where otherwise noted. In addition, all of these dragons share the following standard characteristics.

FREQUENCY: Very rare.

NO. APPEARING: 1-3, except in the case of the Ruby Dragon.

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Breath weapon + possible magic use, except for Sardior, who *definitely* uses magic.

ALIGNMENT: Neutral.

The Neutral dragons are basically reclusive creatures, dwelling in out-of-the-way places, and not too receptive to unexpected visitors. Like all dragons, they get their kicks from lolling around on a pile of treasure. Being named after precious and semi-precious stones, they are especially fond of gems and jewelry. They are generally smaller and slower than other dragons, but make up for this with their outstanding intelligence and overwhelming personalities.

The Neutral dragons are all very charismatic and suave. They delight in riddling talk, and seek to entrap the creatures they en-

counter by charming them with their voices. Anyone not engaged in such things as combat who listens to the dragon's voice faces a 10% cumulative chance per round of being entranced. While he is entranced, the dragon has a chance of implanting a suggestion in his mind. The dragon gets one attempt per creature to *suggest*, and if the creature makes his saving throw by rolling the required percentage, the charm is broken for 6 rounds. The dragon will try to keep him talking, in order to try again, but this time will get only a 5% cumulative chance per round of charming the creature(s). If the dragon fails in his *suggestion* this time, the creature cannot be charmed again.

Going along with their intelligence and charisma, all Neutral dragons have a 50% chance of being psionically endowed. They are also telepathic, although they cannot communicate telepathically with non-telepathic creatures or characters with an intelligence below 17. Magic-using Neutral dragons employ both Magic-User and Druidic spells.

Being smaller than other dragons, Neutral dragons' fear aura in attacking is saved against at a +4 to all opponents. Neutral dragons cannot polymorph themselves, unless they know the spell. They do have the innate ability to *blink* 6 times per day, however, as in the spell. Particulars about each type of dragon are listed below.

	CRYSTAL	TOPAZ	EMERALD	SAPPHIRE	AMETHYST	RUBY
ARMOR CLASS	2	1	0	1	-2	-3
MOVE:	9"/18"	9"/18"	9"/24"	9"/24"	12"/30"	12"/32"
HIT DICE:	4-6	5-7	6-8	7-9	8-10	12 (96 hp)
% IN LAIR:	55%	55%	60%	65%	70%	80%
TREASURE:	H, Ux2	H, Ux2	H, Ux3	H,I,Ux2	H,Ix2,Ux2	100% H Ix3,Ux5
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4/1-4/ 2-12	2-5/2-5/ 2-16	1-6/1-6/ 3-18	1-6,1-6/ 5-20	1-8/1-8/ 5-30	1-10/1-10/ 5-40
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional	Exceptional	Exceptional	Genius	Genius	Supragenius
SIZE:	12' long	15' long	20' long	24' long	30' long	36' long
PSIONICS:	100	120	180	200	250	344
A/D modes:	C/F	B,D/F,H	A,D/F,J	A,C/F,I	A,C,E/F,G,J	All/all
CHANCE OF						
Speaking:	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
M a g i c - u s e :	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	100%
Sleeping:	25%	20%	15%	10%	10%	5%
SUGGESTION:	35%	40%	50%	55%	65%	75%

SPELLS GAINED *

	CRYSTAL	TOPAZ	EMERALD	SAPPHIRE	AMETHYST	RUBY
Very Young	1 1st-D	1 1st-D	1 1st-D 1 1st-MU	1 1st-D 1 1st-MU	2 1st-D 1 1st-MU	**
Young	1 1st-MU	1 1st-D 1 1st-MU	1 1st-D 1 1st-MU	1 1st-D 1 1st-MU 1 2nd-D	1 2nd-D 2 2nd-MU	
Sub-adult	1 2nd-D	1 2nd-D 1 1st-MU	1 2nd-D 1 2nd-MU	1 2nd-D 2 2nd-MU	2 3rd-D 1 3rd-MU	
Young Adult	1 2nd-MU	1 2nd-D 1 2nd-MU	1 2nd-D 1 2nd-MU	2 3rd-D 2 3rd-MU	1 3rd-MU 2 4th-D	
Adult	1 3rd-D	1 3rd-D 1 2nd-MU	1 3rd-D 1 3rd-MU	2 3rd-MU	2 4th-MU 1 5th-D	
Old	1 3rd-MU	1 3rd-D 1 3rd-MU	1 3rd-D 1 3rd-MU	2 4th-D	2 5th-MU 1 5th-D	
Very Old	1 4th-D	1 4th-D 1 3rd-MU	1 4th-D 1 4th-MU	2 4th-MU	2 6th-D	
Ancient	1 4th-MU 1 4th-MU	1 4th-D 1 4th-MU	1 4th-D 1 5th-MU	1 5th-D	2 6th-MU	

*"1 1st-D" means one first-level Druidic spell; "2 3rd-MU" means two third-level Magic-User spells, etc.

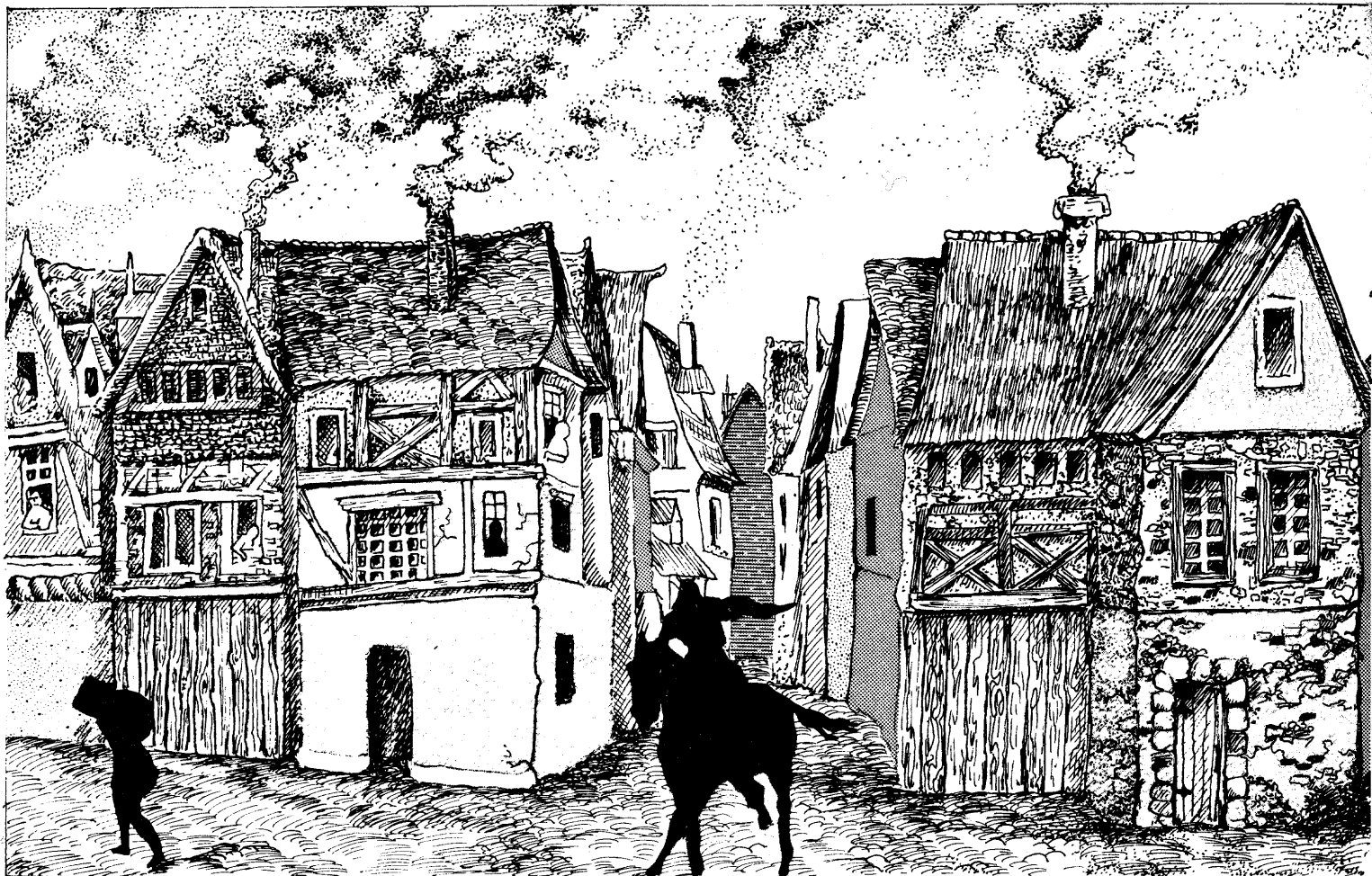
**Sardior, the Ruby Dragon, has 3 each of both Druidic and Magic-User spells of levels 1-7, and has spell books listing all the Magic-User spells of those levels.

It is assumed that as dragons' M-U spells are of a special, verbal-only kind, so also the Neutral dragons' Druidic spells are of a special kind, attuned to their natures, and not requiring mistletoe, etc.

PSIONIC DISCIPLINES (where applicable)

Crystal dragons have 2 minor disciplines each. Topaz dragons, 3

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Step-by-step system for urban encounters

Jeff Swycaffer

No D&D campaign would be complete without a city, in which thieves skulk, assassins ply their trade, and merchants pinch pennies (with oft-surprising strength). Here in the scummy tavern, *The Lost Lunch*, Stinking Ed and his five lowlife pals will slip you a knife 'twixt the ribs more likely than not; there in that garbage-blocked alley Don the Slimy will sell you foul, polluted drugs.

The rotten part of town, by contrast, has its denizens to make Ed and Don resemble St. Francis and Grandma Moses. The thieves' quarters and the South Slum of this city would make Boston's Combat Zone look nice. (Well, not nice, but *better*.)

Have you just been pickpocketed for the fourth time? Are those murderers you spy up on the roof? Is this a dagger I see before me? Call for the watch! And if they respond, and if they arrive before it's too late, the odds are even that they'll shake you down, confiscate your property, and haul you in for shouting.

Perhaps, though, you are rich, and have a fortress for a townhouse, a household guard of 100 strong fighters, and two trusted wizards. Jealous merchants, angry at your success, have hired a saboteur, it seems, and thieves have tunneled into your wine cellar. Count Bombazine is considering treason charges, your guard has 15 spies and two assassins, and here comes the tax-man.

I wouldn't play a merchant for all the gold in Utah! They are, however, necessary. They are also too easy to kill. A merchant, in D&D, gets 1-6 hit points, and that's that. A ten-year-old could kill one. Therefore . . .

I propose that Merchants, and a number of other non-player-

characters, be given opportunities for advancement. There should be 7th-level beggars, 4th-level tradesmen, and so on.

Below are the four charts of the City Encounter Table. Rolling on this is a complex task, requiring four (at least) percentile rolls, but rolls are not too frequent, and the situations can balloon easily into full-fledged and ornate encounters.

First, roll on the Encounter Probability Table. If an encounter is specified, continue with the procedure. If a meeting with the watch is specified, the situation may be handled easily on a "fight 'em/ignore 'em" basis.

Next, a roll on the Type of Person Encountered Table is made. Explanations of the cryptic symbols used therein are given below. Note that this table does not give the statistical breakdown of the city's populace; it is foolish to claim that the beggars outnumber the tradesmen. Rather, this table gives a good sample of the types of people who cause encounters. Beggars will always call for attention, while tradesmen seldom will.

After that, roll for the level of the non-player-character called for, using the Level of the Encounter Table. Many non-player-character types mentioned below have an upper-level limit: ignore results above this.

Finally, roll on the Type of Encounter Table. This will give a situation, usually fraught with conflict. At this point, responsibility devolves upon the referee to place the elements together to give a true encounter.

Encounter Probability Table

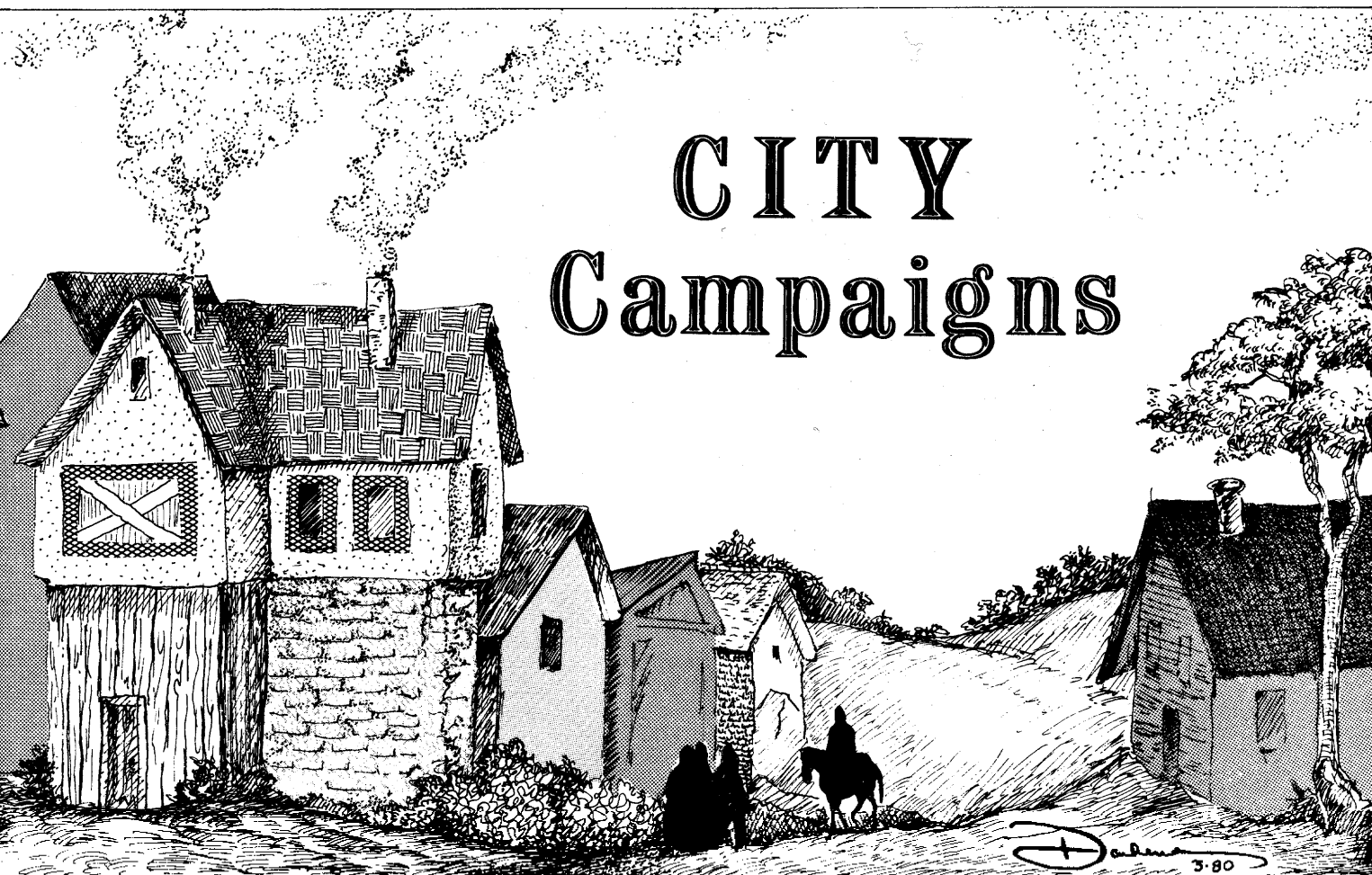
Daytime: Roll every 30-60 minutes.

00-31 Encounter
32-47 The Watch
48-99 Nothing

Evening: Roll every 20-30 minutes.

00-34 Encounter
35-49 The Watch
50-99 Nothing

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Cities can help make characters more 'real'

Paul A. Leathers

What thoughts do the word "adventure" conjure up in the fervent D&Ders' mind?

Dark, dismal dungeons and labyrinthine caves where unknown horrors and cruel traps lurk behind every turn?

Bleak, stark wilderness where the valiant hero must battle both ferocious monsters and the indomitable elements?

The eerie light of an immortal blade as it is drawn from its jeweled scabbard in the glittering starlight?

The spark of a cloven helm as another headless orc falls onto the growing heap of corpses? The searing crackle and blinding flash as a lethal bolt springs from the wizard's outstretched, commanding palm? The roar of the immense dragon's flaming jaws as it meets the strong, steadfast crusader's challenge?

Surely, "adventure" has nothing to do with the commonplace streets and alleys of a town, right?

WRONG!!

It is by treating cities as bland stopovers that many D&Ders, players and DM's alike, allow a potentially exciting part of their campaigns to fade out. Those fortunate enough to have participated in, or even to have witnessed, a really well-done urban adventure will know what I'm talking about. To the rest my comment is this: You don't know what you're missing.

No matter how commonplace they may seem, towns have many advantages which neither dungeons nor wildernesses possess. For example, in the latter two, unless the DM is clever to the point of cruelty, many PC's fall into a fireball, arrows, slash, hack, get-the-treasure

routine, and the game actually becomes monotonous (Heaven forbid!). While gaining experience, treasure, and all the accruing benefits, the character hasn't really progressed since first level, because the player hasn't changed since he first rolled up his alterego's attributes. The character is two-dimensional and as devoid of personality as the peasants he passes in the fields. This is a real tragedy, because the whole point of D&D has been missed; not to be a mechanical sword seeking only E.P. and GP, but to be a living, breathing, feeling part of the world of our dreams.

On the other hand, nowhere is the medium for the development of a character's personality richer than in a town. It is interaction with other humanoids on a more or less non-hostile basis which affords the best opportunity for self-expression. A "routine" is impossible because players never know exactly what is going to happen next. Also, don't think for a moment that urban life in D&D is placid. An incautious character might very well find himself dumped in an alley with a knife in his back.

One important aspect of a character's potential for survival and success in a city is, as always, his profession. I have found that thieves and assassins are the most successful types, or at least the most fun. Being a rather non-violent person (What's this? A pacifist playing D&D?!), I prefer the former. I feel that thieves stand to gain a great deal more than assassins monetarily, while risking less in terms of the performance of their class functions and the remonstrances of an angry guild. After all, assassins' guilds tend to be rather violent. More grisly adventurers may disagree on the grounds that assassins can more readily defend themselves and the fact that greater challenges usually face a murderer than a rogue.

In either case, illicit characters stand the best chance of getting rich quick. Of course, they must face the retribution of the law should they be caught in the act, but often more dangerous is the aforementioned local guild. If a character does not belong to the guild, he may be persecuted for muscling in on its racket, and if he should reach the point

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Greyhawk: The shape of the world

Gary Gygax©

When you read this the release of the *World of Greyhawk* will be an accomplished fact. (I write this with not a little nervousness, having previously stated it would be ready several times in the past, only to find that it had to be shelved for one reason or another. Having seen the whole of the work in finished form, and knowing it has been sent on to the printer, I have a small sense of security, fearing only some natural catastrophe . . .) It is my sincere hope that you find the worth to have been worthy of the wait—or at least that the price of the product is equitable.

The map of the Greyhawk Campaign came first, many years ago. The information came from a few original notes, many ideas, and the activity of the players. Just as the map was drawn from many earlier campaign maps I'd done for one game or another, so too were the states and features of the "World" drawn from many an earlier creation. When all of these odds and ends were put into play, considerable reshaping and change took place. When they were ordered and readied for formal publication, far greater mutation occurred. The *World of Greyhawk* reflects the results of much early gaming and endless hours of intense play, yet it is incomplete in many respects.

The maps show only a portion of the world. It is a very large and significant portion, but it is nevertheless a part of the whole, and during the course of the campaign, players have certainly adventured over more than it depicts. The *Gazetteer* is basically a survey of the states and geographical features. Some details were omitted so as to allow development by individual DMs, some because they are still "unknown," and a few because they will be revealed elsewhere as the need arises.

Steve Carpenter of Miniature Figurines Ltd. is currently designing a set of miniatures rules for warfare on the *World of Greyhawk*. These rules will set forth the orders of battle of the states of the Flanaess and add to the information pertaining to the "World." At the same time, miniature figurines of the various troops are being assembled, so that details of what various units look like will also be known—say the Overking's Guards or the Knights of the Hart.

In addition to having adventures, campaign participants will

soon be able to fight major battles which will affect the course of things. The figure line could eventually number in the hundreds of sets, with possibly a thousand different figures. The initial release will be in the 50-set range, according to Steve. Of course, I'll be contributing to the miniatures rules, and I'm helping to select figure types. The rules and figures will be significant contributions towards developing the "World," but more is needed.

Much of the original activity in the Greyhawk Campaign came in the huge City of Greyhawk. My initial map was only an 8½" x 11" sheet of graph paper, but this was soon enlarged to a four-times size. Even that was too small, so extra, large-scale sections were done up to supplement the main map. I have now gone to what amounts to about four-game-maps size to show the whole of the place in fair detail. The mapping isn't complete, and only a few of the most outstanding places are noted, as there is yet many months of work left before the design will be in shape to submit to TSR's Product Development Department. Sometime in 1981 or 1982, though, you should see a giant map and gazetteer for the *City of Greyhawk* being offered for sale. The gazetteer will detail the deities of the place not otherwise dealt with in modules or the like, by the way, and readers will learn more about "Old Iuz," the current menace from the state of that name, as well as know who Ralishaz is, why Hextor is bad news in combat, and so on.

While that project is yet a ways off, modules of the World of Greyhawk are currently in the works. Skip Williams is working on my original outline for *Shadowland*, and from what I've seen so far, we should be able to have a final product out this year. The module will be an adventure on the Plane of Shadow—perhaps that should be Quasi-plane of Shadow. Other such modules are also in the hopper.

As I'd mentioned in a previous column, Steve Marsh sent me a wealth of material on various planes, just as I was getting my own creative processes going. At first I envisioned a long-distance exchange with manuscripts eventually going back and forth between us. Now Steve will be coming to work for TSR this summer for a couple of months or so, and I have hope that he and I can work up general outlines and hammer out details, so that only one exchange of materials will be needed for each piece.

Because of this, there might be as many as ten World of Greyhawk modules based on the planes by the end of 1981 or mid-82. Much depends on Steve and me, but the needs of the Kindly Publisher must also be considered. If you are really hot to see these scenarios, start asking for them. Customer pressure does get back to us via retailers and wholesalers. In fact, sometimes it is hard to tell them from the fans, for their inquiries soon become demands after a missed deadline or two. I'll get back to demands a bit later.

One whole piece of the "World" remains to be covered, and from what input I receive, it is perhaps the most important sector. It is the dungeons under Greyhawk Castle. It might seem that that would be the easiest of all to put into production. Not so! About the time *Dungeons & Dragons* was published, the dungeons under the ruined castle consisted of only 13 levels down and a couple of extra on the sides. As the group of players increased, and the level of experience for each climbed, upper levels of the dungeon were sacked, word got around on what to avoid, etc. That series was pretty much sacrificed.

Rob Kuntz joined me as co-DM of the Greyhawk Campaign, and he took over doing new levels after I'd done about two dozen. Greyhawk then had about 50 various levels. As my involvement with TSR grew more demanding of my time, Rob assumed the major role as DM, and naturally the campaign altered in thrust and shape. Soon he was actually the sole DM, as I had the *Temple of Elemental Evil* campaign going. Eventually, Rob decided that he couldn't shape the "World" beyond the City of Greyhawk area and turned the whole back to me.

The Temple campaign was far more detailed in all respects, for it dealt with not only a dungeon, but had the village nearby, several towns and states involved in the scheme of events. Likewise, its inhabitants were drawn from AD&D. It was not too difficult to put the *Village of Hommlet* into shape for publication. The *Temple of Elemental Evil* is a slightly different case, however, for I used some

random dungeon generation methods as a test of the systems when I put the design together. I am, therefore, doing a major rework on it, and so you now know why the *Temple* is so late in coming.

In light of that, consider what will have to be done to Greyhawk Castle to put it into shape for general publication. Both Rob and I liked to "wing it" as much as possible, so as to have flexibility and to tie in past events. Think of over four dozen level maps with partial matrices, skimpy notes, cryptic symbols and areas erased or penciled over due to destructive actions! The whole 50 levels or thereabouts form a cohesive dungeon, of course, so that means to undertake the project, I must sit down and handle it all together, with as few breaks as possible, in order to reflect the general oneness. This will eventually be done, yes indeed! But I don't dare begin at this time. . . .

Before the dungeons of Castle Greyhawk are dusted off and construction begins anew, the rough manuscript for T2, *Temple of Elemental Evil*, must be finalized. With the very good words I've heard about the *Village of Hommlet* offering, I'm under considerable pressure to get T2 out—but in a form comparable to T1, so there will be much agonizing and rewriting. Then, Rob Kuntz has the reworked *Lost Caverns* module which must be finalized also. It was used for a MDG tournament a few years ago at WinterCon, and the scenario is very good. We want to get it into print as soon as possible. As with the *Temple*, we have general demands for more modules of superior quality. TSR's design staff is looking for and working on modules of introductory and intermediate level for all of our role-playing games. Without the Greyhawk dungeons, players will soon have a whole spectrum of adventures to select from. The pressure is to get out what has been begun, not to begin new projects of awesome scope.

To sum it all up, the World of Greyhawk project will go on for several years, with the initial maps and *Gazetteer* complemented by rules for miniature figure recreation of the warfare of the place, plus a line of figurines from MiniFigs in the near future. Next will come a series of special modules—one this year, and then many more through the next couple of years. The *City of Greyhawk* might make a 1981 publication date, certainly 1982, and about the same time the series which will eventually represent the whole of the *Dungeons of Castle Greyhawk* will begin. If all goes well, there might be an add-on map or two, and there might also be additional dungeon/campaign sets similar to the T-Series. Because there are so many demands on my time, much of this depends on the co-operation of fellows such as Skip Williams, Steve Marsh, and maybe even Rob Kuntz and Ernie Gygax (neither of whom are known for their rapid work, shall we say?).

* * *

On other fronts, it seems likely now that TSR and Games Workshop have reached a final agreement regarding the publication of the *Fiend Folio*, the second volume of monsters for *Advanced D&D*. I had hoped for a release in late May, but it might be June (or even July) before the book sees print. Watch for it in any case. Jim Ward and Rob Kuntz have all but finished *Deities & Demigods*, the volume of *AD&D* which will round out the divine aspects of the game . . . The information in the book includes very detailed stats of the deities and others covered, details of where their power is, whom they will accept as worshippers, and a fair amount of information regarding their priests and ceremonies. *Deities & Demigods* is slated for release in August. Your dealer should have it sometime around the 15th of the month, and TSR will have it as a premiere release at GenCon. You will, I believe, find the work equal to the rest of *AD&D*, and a highly valuable addition to any campaign.

Jim Ward will have finished *Deities & Demigods* just in time in another respect. Late this spring, he will be leaving the teaching profession to join TSR's Sales Department. Hopefully, this will not mean that Jim's creative efforts will all be directed towards selling. After all, there are evenings and weekends to write new material and design modules. With Jim nearby, perhaps he and I can manage to get some of our proposed co-operative designs into work. He and I

have been discussing several RP/FRP ideas, and my son, Luke, recently developed an exceptionally good *Gamma World* module idea which he and I have worked into a fairly complete outline. Who can tell what will come out of all this? Stay tuned, as they say, for further developments.

Jeff Perren will be moving to a location much nearer to (if not actually in) Lake Geneva soon. Besides the possibilities of doing a major revision and expansion of *Chainmail*, Jeff also mentioned some very interesting ideas he has for miniatures rules and board-games. With a bit of luck, the old team of Perren & Gygax might come out with something new in the not too distant future.

Finally, as a bonus for reading through all of this, you will find same Order of Battle information for certain renowned figures in the World of Greyhawk. They will possibly appear in the general army lists, but then again they might not make it. Either way, you will have the information first.

Bigby (MU of 18th level): Fortress location unknown but rumored to be somewhere north of the Nyr Dyv, possibly between the Shield Lands and the Bandit Kingdoms. (Bigby has been seen in the City of Greyhawk). Forces are:

Heavy Cavalry: 50 (Elite)
Medium Cavalry: 100 (Regulars)
Light Cavalry: 100 (Regulars)
Light Horse Archers: 100 (Levied)
Armored Infantry: 50 (Elite)
Heavy Infantry: 180 (Regulars)
Light Crossbowmen: 100 (Regulars)
Heavy Crossbowmen: 50 (Regulars)
Pikemen: 100 (Elite)

This force is officered by several: higher-level fighters. It is supported by clerics and lower-level magic-users as well. About 200 eleven warriors have been known to be with the band when it fought, and at another time about 150 dwarves from the Kron Hills were serving with Bigby; but additional information cannot be gained. (Bigby was the original; apprentice of Mordenkainen, and when the latter opted to explore the West, Bigby remained behind to uphold and protect their territorial rights.) Alignment of this force is Neutral, with some good deeds rumored.

Mordenkainen: (MU of 20th level): Several years ago, the Neutral arch-mage took his rather vast cavalry force and rode into the west, supposedly on a mission to succor an (Evil) associate who called for his aid. He has never returned. His force consisted of:

Medium Cavalry: 500 (Regulars)
Light Cavalry: 500 (Regulars)
Light Horse Archers: 1,000 (Regulars), 2,000 (Levied)

This force was Chaotic, possibly Neutral, although any Evil cleric encountered could count on a swift and sure death.

Robilar (Fighter of 19th level): Sometime over one year ago, Robilar freed a demon, and in the ensuing difficulties, forces aligned with Good sacked and destroyed his stronghold west of the City of Greyhawk. It is reported that the following force escaped and is now somewhere in the Pomarj region:

Heavy Cavalry: 50 (Regulars)
Medium Cavalry: 100 (Regulars)
Light Cavalry: 50 (Regulars)
Light Horse Crossbowmen: 50 (Regulars)
Heavy Infantry: 100 (Elite Qrcish)
Light Infantry: 100 (Levied)
Heavy Archers: 50 (Elite Orcish)
Light Crossbowmen: 50 (Regulars)
Pole Armed Infantry: 100 (Regular Orcish)

Many of the higher-level figures were slain during the intaking of the castle, but Robilar has Otto, a high-level magic-user, and Quij, an Orcish hero of high ability but low intelligence, as well as some relatively low-level cohorts. This force is Lawful Evil but suspect by the minions of Hell due to chaotic actions.

Tenser (MU of 19th level): Hidden somewhere along the southern shores of the Nyr Dyv is the fortress of Tenser. It is likely that the identity of the master of the place is kept secret. Reported troops are:

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from Jean Wells

12



The History of Elfland

G. Arthur Rahman

The Elven city of Letho was one of the most remarkable jewels in the crown of the Lloroi Empire. Neuth (Elven for "Abiding Place of the Elves") was a stable bulwark at the northern fringe of civilization. Warm sea currents made the climate mild the year around; gratefully the Elves worshiped Miodmuiri, the sea, and Oenglamh, the sun.

This peaceful world was destroyed by the upheavals of the Cataclysm. The vast forests of Neuth were shattered and set aflame by lightning and blazing meteor showers. The sea floor buckled and the coast rolled back hundreds of miles to the south. The alteration of topography placed Letho in a depression that rapidly filled in with muck from the surrounding lakes and newly formed streams. The mud buried the city; only the high, slender towers remained in view.

Somehow, amid the chaos of the Cataclysm, a natural leader, Seolan, gathered the survivors of the Elven civilization around him. He was well aware that his people stood in danger of losing their hold on the past and plunging into barbarism. This threat he fought with tireless energy, charging every Elf who knew a useful trade or art to make himself known and to do what he knew best. Most important of all, every craftsman, artist and scientist was required to teach what he knew to as many apprentices as possible. Seolan's authority, informal at first, was legitimized eventually by his acclamation as the High Prince of Neuth.

Seolan installed his incipient government in a semi-intact town named Pherdiad. To help him administer his program of cultural preservation, the prince chose educated Elves as subordinates. By their careful planning, starvation was prevented and marauders were driven out of Elfland. Books and scrolls were gathered from the ruins, and schools were established to prevent the barbarization of the rising generation which had never known the Empire.

Seolan laid the groundwork for an autocratic state and his successors extended the power of the High Prince. Only a century after the Cataclysm, the Elves dwelled in orderly villages where scholars still pondered the classics of old, while elsewhere Men lived in caves and fought with stone axes. But the common Elf was not a free creature; his work, his travel, his obligations were dictated by a semi-divine monarch and a growing web of administrators. The Elves' herculean attempt to extend the life of the past had spawned a stilted culture, tradition-bound, caste-ridden and hostile to novelty and experimentation.

The first five centuries after the Cataclysm saw Neuth grow into a secure land where poets amused a luxuriant court and the more learned Elves debated points of philosophy. Yet, despite the mild climate of the post-Cataclysm, the winds of change turned chillingly upon Elfland. When the Elves journeyed outside Neuth to worship Miodmuiri at the seacoast, they observed some of the scattered barbarian tribes. Comparing them with their own dignified culture reinforced the Elves' conviction that they were the best and most favored of all races. Yet even while poets composed panegyrics to Elven glory, trouble was looming on the borders.

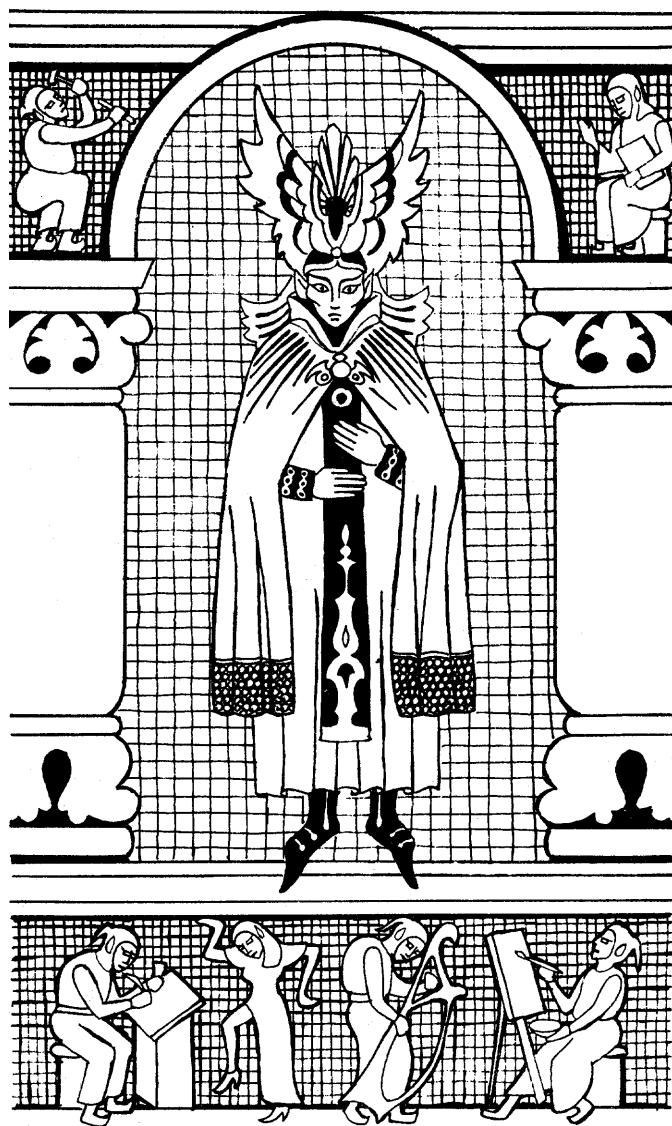
Says the ancient biographer Caladh in his *Lives of the Seolians*: "In the reign of Dalan, for what cause I know not, a blast from the

gods smote us; and unexpectedly from the regions of the west, beyond the Spires of the Eternal, invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory against our land. By main force they easily seized it; and having overthrown the prince in Pherdiad, they then burned our towns ruthlessly and treated all our people with a cruel hostility. Finally they appointed one of their number as king, who forced all the county to carry tribute to Pherdiad."

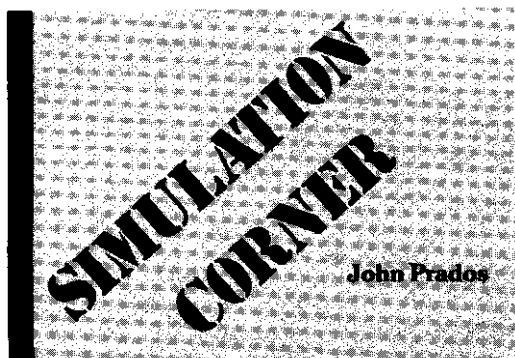
The invaders—called the Sion Hac ("Foreign Beasts")—dominated Pherdiad for four generations. Their control of eastern Elfland, however, seems to have been tenuous, for it was there that native leaders began the revolt against them. Perhaps civilization had weakened the Sion Hac, or the Elves belatedly learned better fighting tactics. Regardless, their rising finally freed Elfland from human domination. They razed Pherdiad, which had become a symbol of their humiliation, and built a new capital that they called Ider Bolis ("Eternal Victory").

After the liberation, Elfland became a grimmer place. Gone was the spontaneous enjoyment of life that had prevailed before the invasion. The belief in Elven superiority became an active doctrine in which the Elves buried their shame. Most to suffer from it were the descendants of the human Sion Hac and their Elven concubines. These people were called the Ercii ("Mixed Bloods") and relegated to the status of pariahs. Not permitted into any caste, they survived

(Turn to page 37)



Mosaic of the High Prince Seolan, the Redeemer, in the Glorious Hall of High Princes



The development of dice, tables, and combat resolution

Many of us are familiar with the inexplicable feeling of power, or control or something, that comes from holding a handful of dice. Some people have many dice only to play many games; others specialize in playing games that explicitly require any number of dice, and indeed a number of different kinds of dice for the same game. Despite all this use of dice, it is a fair guess that few gamers are equally familiar with where the dice came from and what their functions are in the games we play. A view of the development of the use of dice serves to illustrate the evolution of a conscious attitude toward the design of games.

Of course, everyone knows that dice are commonly used to inject an element of chance or uncertainty into games. It is not quite so widely recognized that in the earliest commercial games, such as Monopoly, dice were used to mediate *movement* of pieces. The reason this is significant is that it indicates the designer's conception that the pieces in his game had no autonomous or inherent capabilities. In Monopoly the player's capabilities derived from his money holdings and gains and from the chance of the throw on movement; none of this was intrinsic to game pieces or actors.

The beginning of *simulation* in games did not occur until actors and pieces received intrinsic values. At that point it became reasonable to ask the player to use a piece or set of pieces to accomplish specific game tasks. The function of dice came to be a different one, that of moderating the interactions between pieces, as in combat resolution in a wargame.

This introduces a second element, that of matrixes or "tables." Even when the value became intrinsic to game pieces, simulation did not emerge full grown. Rather, the dice introduced simple uncertainties in outcome. A good basic example is Risk, wherein all pieces (called armies) have a value of "1" and dice are thrown by both players and compared in a straightforward higher-number-wins fashion.

It was only one step farther than this, however, to the use of a "table" in conjunction with dice to increase the range of possible variation in outcome of a game action. This development occurred with the introduction of *Tactics II* by Avalon Hill some years ago. Since then the combination of uses of dice and "tables" have become quite numerous and sophisticated.

The basic design consideration was to inject skill into the play of the game by allowing the player to maximize his chance of a particular result through a comparison of the basic values of his pieces and those of the opponent. Thus, the luck of the dice could be moderated through the manipulation of the odds at which a given combat or other game function was resolved. The theoretical ability to maximize is what has made these games contests of strategy rather than simple games.


There is a dilemma here. On the one hand, we have a wide spectrum of people, not familiar with the games, who often put them down, reasoning that the use of dice in a game is what makes it a game of luck rather than one of skill. In this view, all capabilities must be known and all game systems deterministic. The fallacy does not sit well with simulation gamers, or with designers, for the other horn of this dilemma is that the trend in simulation games over the past few years has been to increase the role of uncertainty (chance) in game outcomes. This trend flows from the realization by designers that, in fact, the unrestricted manipulation of odds across the columns of a combat results table is not a sufficient test of skill.

Let us now review some of the ways designers have attempted to improve upon the simple dice-"table" method of deriving game outcomes, although we must restrict the discussion essentially to the category of wargames. Among the earliest efforts were those that provided alternative results tables, such as combat results tables for different weather conditions or for different periods of time covered by a game (viz. *War in the East* or *1914*). This was rather limited in effect because players could still master the use of each results table; they merely had to perform this action for a greater number of tables.

Another approach was to insert factors that modified the die roll itself. This allowed a results table to be constructed that had a larger number of discrete combat results on it and thus allowed for more variation than the 1-6 results on a conventional die. An alternative method which can be used together or separately is to insert factors in the game system that require column shifts of the odds represented on the results table. Both these methods allow for a considerable increase in the range of possible outcomes and increase uncertainty in this way. Both have the disadvantage that if carried to extremes they can result in the player having to keep track of so many individual shifts and modifications that orderly planning for combat and a reasonable ability to "satisfize," if not to "maximize," the chance of a favorable outcome becomes impossible.

A third way of expanding uncertainty involves a simple increase in the number of posted combat results on a table. This can be accomplished by using a table in conjunction with two dice rather than one, enabling the representation of eleven possible results for each column rather than six. The recent release of a new edition of *Bismarck* by Avalon Hill has taken the two-die device one step further: by switching to a base 6 number system (rather than our base 10 numeric system) the designer found it possible to produce some 36 possible results for two dice rather than only eleven. This was an interesting effort and would show great promise, except for people's general lack of knowledge of number systems other than our base 10 variety.

A similar effect could be achieved by the use of ten-sided or twenty-sided dice with our results tables. This in fact shows great promise, but has a major problem in that until now the cost of such dice has been so high that it has been found to be overly expensive to include them with games, and most games provide the player with all the components necessary to play the game—including dice. If the production cost of these many-sided dice can be brought down to the point where it is comparable to conventional six-sided dice, then it would be reasonable to expect to see more widespread use of these

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kinds of dice in games. Alternatively, and probably in tandem with the increasing availability of computer and calculator technology, it may become feasible to use randomly generated numbers instead of any dice at all.

Some development has also been made with results tables themselves. The most important attention has been focused at the mathematical consistency of results tables and to fitting possible combat results with the period being portrayed. Column-shifts and die-roll modifications that are already mentioned are one development in the use of results as well. Also important is the fact that two kinds of results tables have evolved. In one, the relative values of defender and attacker are commonly compared as an odds ratio, and combat resolution proceeds from that point. In addition to this "odds" table there is also a "differential" results table in which columns represent the difference in value between Attacker and Defender. The latter permits a more acute treatment of battle situations in which the effective differences in strength between the two sides is less than 2:1. Some games make use of tables that don't have combat resolution as their aim, but rather establish pre-conditions for it. This is the case when the opponents select tactics cards before engagement that convey advantage in the battle. Examples of this kind of game include *1776* and, at the extreme, *Kriegspiel*.

Finally, the use of tables as weather charts, determinants of ideosyncratic factors, or reinforcement displays is also widespread. One should not forget that the use of tables to provide a compact and attractive information presentation is only one use for the device. When used to resolve combat, the basic structure of the CRT has definite implications for the play of the game. Setting up a results table must be viewed this way from the very beginning of the design of the game.

The tables and dice only exist to moderate functions in the game. It is also possible to structure the combat segment in such a way that tables only intervene in certain places and for certain purposes. Much more coherent thought has been applied to the design of combat systems than to the structure of combat results tables per se. This is recognized as a central element of game design, and a wide variety of developments has been introduced.

There is now a general distinction between combat systems in tactical games and those in games of higher organizational level. Moreover, tactical combat has been made into a successive re-determination game mechanic, as in games where one first rolls for engagement, then for combat result, then for vulnerability, then damage, etc. The techniques of designing combat mechanics are important and should be discussed at length, but here it is only possible to make the point that tables themselves should not be considered in isolation from the game combat mechanics as a whole.

Where does this all lead? Have dice and the two-dimensional matrix been pushed to the edge of their usefulness in game design? I'm sorry to say that it's impossible to say yes or no at this date. In all probability, the answer lies in the twin questions of whether the manual game will continue to be the mainstream of gaming or whether the man-machine simulation will take over, and the question of whether further sophistication in results tables and in number-generation is desirable or necessary.

The answers to these questions are necessarily subjective. It is apparent that even the most sophisticated combat models cannot be made to generate "real" outcomes. Given this, and since I prefer to play games of moderate complexity that are manageable, I tend to think that infinite sophistication is not desirable, while computer games as yet do not incorporate situations of sufficient scope to make them interesting in the play. No doubt there will be further development along these lines, but I would think that shifting overly to computer gaming will tend toward keeping gamers an isolated and fairly small group. There is no reason why this should be the case, but there is also no reason why any game of moderate complexity cannot have a combat results system just as coherent and sophisticated as necessary to warrant a reasonable claim to being a true simulation.

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Constructing your own hierarchy of gods and goddesses can add depth and "realism" to an AD&D campaign. The process of devising deities that are logical, consistent and purposeful can be long and involved—but it can also be a lot of fun!

As an example of how to draw up a pantheon, I'd like to present a set of characters I once devised after reading one of Jim Ward's "nightmares" in *The Dragon*.

James, while perhaps being tongue in cheek (no, I don't know whose cheek), produces D&D material that can curl the hair of a DM who is trying to think of AD&D as an intellectual as well as fun pursuit. Here follows a sampling of my Monty Haul Pantheon!

Introduction

The Monties are powerful beings who are worshiped by almost no one and loathed by everyone else. They are *extremely* powerful, and are not openly opposed by characters or other gods when they make their occasional voyages to the Prime Material Plane.

The reason for the Monties' vast power (and the reason why they are disliked so fiercely by so many) is their ability to absorb magic power which is used on them, turning detriment into benefit for themselves! If, for instance, one is hit with a +5 Holy Sword, the weapon will be destroyed and the deity will *gain* five hit points. Monties thrive off a Wizard's spells, readily gobble magic weapons and armor of all sorts, and live for the moment when some foolish evil Cleric will cast *Destruction* on one of them!

If another Deity is presumptuous enough to try to combat or influence one of the Monties, that god will find that his/her magics will not work. Even a powerful God's Decree has no effect whatsoever on a Monty—except to *give* it an additional 20 hit points.

Below are brief descriptions of some of the Monties—enough, hopefully, to make you want to never see them again! If one of them does find his/her way into your campaign and decides to stay for a while . . . well, it was a nice campaign while it lasted.

MONTY HAUL (Mr. Excessive)

Str 27, Int 18, Wis 3, Dex 20, Con 19, Cha 3

Armor Class: -4

Hit Points: 1,010

Class/level equivalent: M-U 20th, Ill. 10th

Alignment: Chaotic neutral

Move: 36"

Special abilities: Can cast 24 levels of spells per round of any M-U type through 7th level. His curse (no s.t., 200-foot range) makes a figure run in terror at the sight of a gold piece, faint at the sight of a platinum piece, and die (no saving throw) if it lays eyes on a gem.

GILDA QUICKSILVER

Str 19, Int 4, Wis 10, Dex 20, Con 22, Cha 19

Armor Class: -4

Hit Points: 707

Class/level equivalent: Cleric 20th

Alignment: Chaotic good

Move: 24"

Special abilities: She turns wood, parchment, or any other non-living organic matter to silver (no s.t.) at a 60' range, but has no control over the power. She can bestow this blessing on another character, but then he/she has no control over it either. Turning things to silver is an act which summons Monty 35% of the time. Gilda is beautiful and has the best of intentions, but is a bit scatterbrained.

VARD-META-ALI (The Walking Face)

Str 17, Int 20, Wis 4, Dex 14, Con 20, Cha 10

Armor Class: -4

Hit Points: 707

Class/level equivalent: M-U 20th, Ill. 10th

Alignment: Neutral chaotic

Move: 24"

Special abilities: Limitless psionic power, all attack modes, but is himself immune to psionic attack. Can ply any metal, by force of his will, into a piece of "art" that is so hideous that persons under 15th level die of fright (no s. t.). He will ply his trade on any metal he sees at a range of 200 feet. He is 2 feet tall with a head the size of an adult man's.

GLOBKUZ (The Putrid Pile)

Str 19, Int 4, Wis 7, Dex 24, Con 20, Cha 0

Armor Class: -8

Hit Points: 808

Class/level equivalent: Fighter 20th

Alignment: Neutral

Move: 15"

Special abilities: Any brain possessing knowledge of a spell is forever destroyed if he touches it. He has the ability to grow five times larger than a chosen object and absorb it. He can follow in a teleportation wake, and thus can never be escaped from. Globkuz appears as a stinking pile of bluish-green putridness.

PERRYNOYIA (The Ghastly Visage)

Str 17, Int 3, Wis 4, Dex 20, Con 17, Cha -3

Armor Class: -2

Hit Points: 704

Class/level equivalent: M-U 18th, Fighter 25th

Alignment: Neutral & chaotic

Move: 16"

Special abilities: Perrynoyia's specialty is the Charisma Zap, which when directed at a target will give that creature the worst case of acne ever known. That means that each time he performs the Zap, the result gets worse and worse. He causes creatures to become diseased (choose any four diseases at random) by his touch. He will Zap anyone who is reluctant to hand over magic protection devices. He can detect magical protections, including armor, at 1,000 feet. Perrynoyia wears gobs of old rings, cloaks, bracers, etc., that were once magic protection devices. He appears as a human being, but looks like someone who has every disease imaginable all at once.

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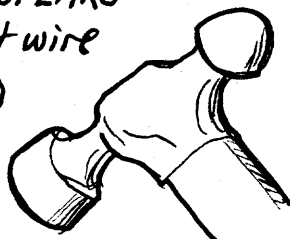
LONG LANCE

MIKE BARBARO of Bronx, New York, is an excellent but poorly rewarded miniaturist. After winning the "Best Fantasy Army" category at Origins '79, he has yet to get his trophy. (Shame on you S + F World!) Undaunted, Mike wants to try again in 1980, and asks how to make lances & spears for 25mm figures. **HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:**

① WIRE SPEARS

Use light wire

①



Flatten out the end of the wire against a metal back stop.

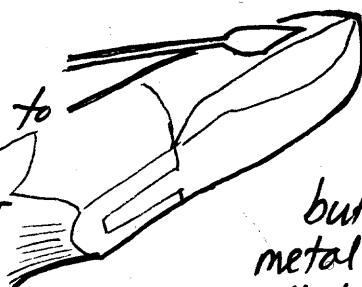
② The wire will

curl 'cause of the way it was drawn.

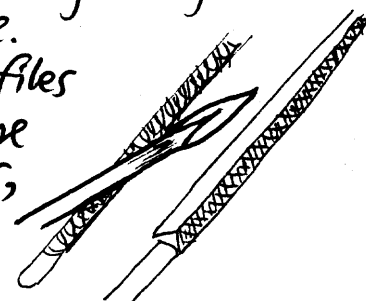
Straighten it some in the jaws of a small vise.



③ Use a small side cutter to cut the wire to the form of a spear point.

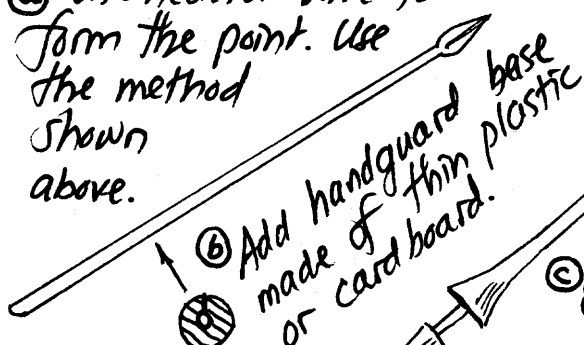


④ Needle files can finish the shaping process, but since the metal is soft this will be no chore.



② HEAVY LANCES

① Use heavier wire to form the point. Use the method shown above.



② Add handguard base made of thin plastic or card board.

③ Fill in handguard & counterweight with green putty.

④ Paste on pennant if you wish.



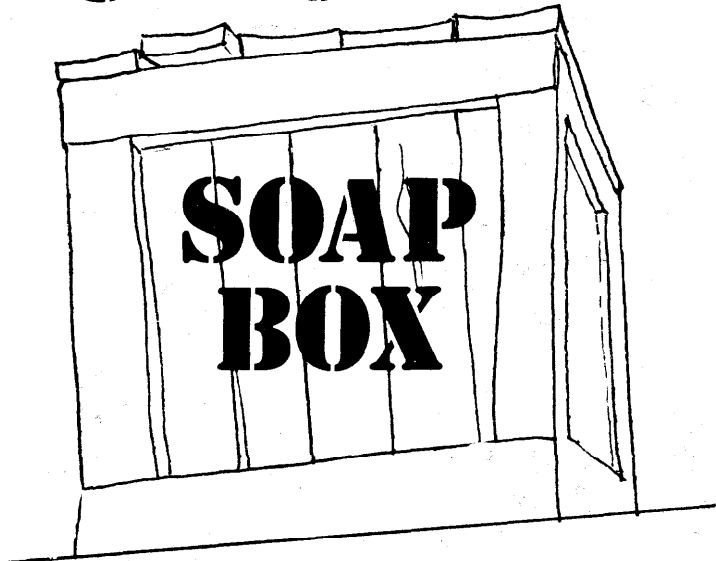
BELOW: Mike waiting for the bus, the right way in N.Y.

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UP ON A



Magical systems: Rationale and reconciliation

Kristan J. Wheaton

Magic is always something to be reckoned with in the worlds of *Dungeons & Dragons*. There are as many systems of magic as there are universes created by the individual Dungeon Master. Some are well thought out but many are makeshift and haphazard. The purpose of this article is to define a system which will help merge the varied concepts of magic into a more cohesive, understandable format.

Initially, some general definitions must be examined. The basic premise behind magic is that it is an energy; pliant and elusive, to be sure, but energy nonetheless. The practice of magic is basically the controlling and directing of this energy. Sometimes it becomes a force, as in a lightning bolt, while at other times it will be a director of forces, a catalyst, as it were, as in an ice storm. The concept of magic as energy should be easily understood, as it is almost universal among Dungeon Masters.

Now that an outline for the definition of magic has been developed, one must turn to the Magic User in order to comprehend the entire system. The Magic User is merely one who attempts to understand the energy of magic. His role is analogous to any scientist. Just as the physicist attempts to understand the physical forces about him, a Magic User tries to comprehend the intensity of magic. With this perspective, it

is obvious that magic must grow in the same manner that science evolved between the times of Aristotle and Einstein.

There are two basic schools of magical systems. The first is the "slow and steady" school. Its proponents claim that magical power comes through research; that the Magic User is a passive character, confined to his tower, with only brief sojourns to collect more research material. His control of the energy comes through exhaustive incantations coupled with time-consuming preparations.

The second school consists of those who believe in "quick-draw" magic. In this system, control of the energy is on the Magic User's fingertips. His incantations are used only to define the form the magic will take. Research does not play a large role because the extent of his present knowledge is so large that research is almost counterproductive. His is the role of the "combat" Magic User.

Both ideologies are as viable as they are congruent, to the point of

"... it is obvious that magic must grow in the same manner that science evolved between the times of Aristotle and Einstein."

absolute harmony. The basic fallacy of those who see contradictions between the two schools is that they envision magic as a static system. However, if magic is truly an energy form, then the knowledge of the use of magic must have evolved, just as the knowledge of the operation of the universe has evolved. Those of the first school view magic as Renaissance man may have seen physics, while those of the latter discipline see the Magic User as we might imagine the physicist of the future.

The differences are as simple as the differences between pure and applied, the known and the unknown, research and practice. If one envisions an evolution of magic, then either of the two systems—or anything in between—becomes a viable option to the Dungeon Master.

Thus it can be seen that all Magic Users, as well as systems of magic, can be placed within the parameters of an evolutionary scale. A question still remains: If the premises to this general system of magic are correct, then what conclusions can be drawn? The answer to this question is beyond the scope of this article; however, the premises mentioned so blithely in the above question can be examined. Although several questions come to mind, the major argument is one from Law and Chaos.

With magic defined as an energy and with the constant references and analogies to science, one might think that magic could be expressed as a series of laws, thus leaving no place for the Chaotic Magic User. This is correct, to a point. Magic can be expressed as law, but not

"Magic is such a flexible energy that only a Chaotic can fully appreciate the nuances and vagaries of its form."

completely or ultimately. The Lawful Magic User has a greater ability to direct magical energy. His laws allow him to use magic effectively and with constant results. However, he can never really control or understand magic in the same way a Chaotic Magic User can. Magic is an energy that is random by nature. This allows those who subscribe to the Chaotic alignment to control magical energy to a greater degree, by virtue of their more thorough understanding of that energy. Magic is such a flexible energy that only a Chaotic can fully appreciate the nuances and vagaries of its form.

The discussion of magic in the preceding paragraphs as an evolutionary process has rationalized those systems of magic which were formerly at odds. All systems of magic are in harmony with one another, given the broad parameters of the evolutionary system and the infinite extension of alternate universes. The major conflict between Law and Chaos's ultimate use of magic is resolved by understanding that Law may direct magic more effectively, while Chaos has the ability to control magic due to the thorough understanding of the basic unordered nature of the energy.

Magic can be as simple or as complex, as random or as defined, as the individual wants it to be. However, the source and variety of magic must be at least partially understood for it to be fully appreciated when incorporated into a campaign.

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Armies of the Renaissance

Nick Nascati

Part VI—Landsknecht and Reiters

By 1475, the reputation of the Swiss Pikemen had been firmly established among the armies of Western Europe. There were few, if any, bodies of organized troops who could withstand their awesome charge. After 1500, the Swiss served almost exclusively with the French, so it was obvious that some type of counter-measure was needed. About 1490, the first steps were taken.

Maximillian of Austria, the Holy Roman Emperor, saw how crucial the need was to develop a competent force of infantry to oppose the Swiss. He appointed Joachim Von Frundsburg, a competent general and veteran of many campaigns, to accomplish the task. Von Frundsburg took on his job with relish, and was determined to match the Swiss. He began by hiring veteran infantry from all over the Empire and Europe; sturdy Brabanters and Flemings, Germans of every description, Italians, Spanish, even French, flocked to the rich and wide-open purse Von Frundsburg offered.

The fighting men were intensely trained in Swiss-style tactics, as well as in the use of musket, arquebus and crossbow. Being modeled after the Swiss, the major part of the Landsknecht force was made up of infantry. However, unlike the Swiss, the Landsknecht had a healthy regard for mounted men. There were formations of light cavalry, dressed like the Landsknecht, and armed with arquebus or crossbow. They were trained as scouts and skirmishers, and were often utilized in a dragoon role, to move swiftly forward on horseback and then dismount to hold a strategic objective. These light cavalry were modeled essentially along the lines of the light Stradiot of the Venetian forces, and formed a small but important part of the Imperial forces.

Heavy cavalry came in two varieties, ritters and reiters. There is some confusion about the two similar terms, but the following explanation should be clear.

The ritters were typical armored lancers, similar to those found throughout Western Europe. They were fully clothed in plate armor and carried a heavy battle lance and a long, straight sword. Their horses often had plate armor as well, to protect them from crossbow bolts and bullets. These troops were the primary shock force of the Imperial army, and one can well imagine the sort of impact such heavy armored men would have on an opposing line.

The reiters were the infamous, black-armored pistoliers of the Imperial army. Their dress went through two phases. They originally wore full plate armor to the waist, with heavy boots on their legs and an open helmet on their head. Later, as the need for more mobility arose, two distinct types emerged. One was a very lightly armored reiter whose only protection may have been a light chainmail shirt, and who wore a soft, pilgrim-type hat and heavy boots. The other wore a long-sleeved mail shirt under a black breastplate, with an open, lobster-type helmet. The one constant factor in both phases was armament. The reiters carried three wheellock or matchlock pistols, two in saddle holsters and one generally stuck in a boot. For close-in fighting they carried a long, heavy sword known as an estoc. Their horses were often all black as well, and were unarmored so as to give them maximum speed for maneuvering.

The tactic most often associated with the ritters was the picturesque and complicated caracole. This formation consisted of a column at least six deep of reiters, performing a tightly drilled move-and-fire piece which was devastating to opposing infantry. Each line in turn trotted up into pistol range; each man discharged two of his pistols and then wheeled around to the back of the formation to reload. This tactic was especially useful against opposing pike formations. The concentrated fire would knock holes in the dense formation, and the reiters would charge in to exploit the gap.

Von Frundsburg had done his work well. He reviewed with justifiable pride the fine troops he had trained. They were better than anything else the Empire could field. The question was, however, could they beat the Swiss? In the initial contests the Landsknecht were devastated; the Swiss fought with tremendous ferocity against these Germans who copied their tactics.

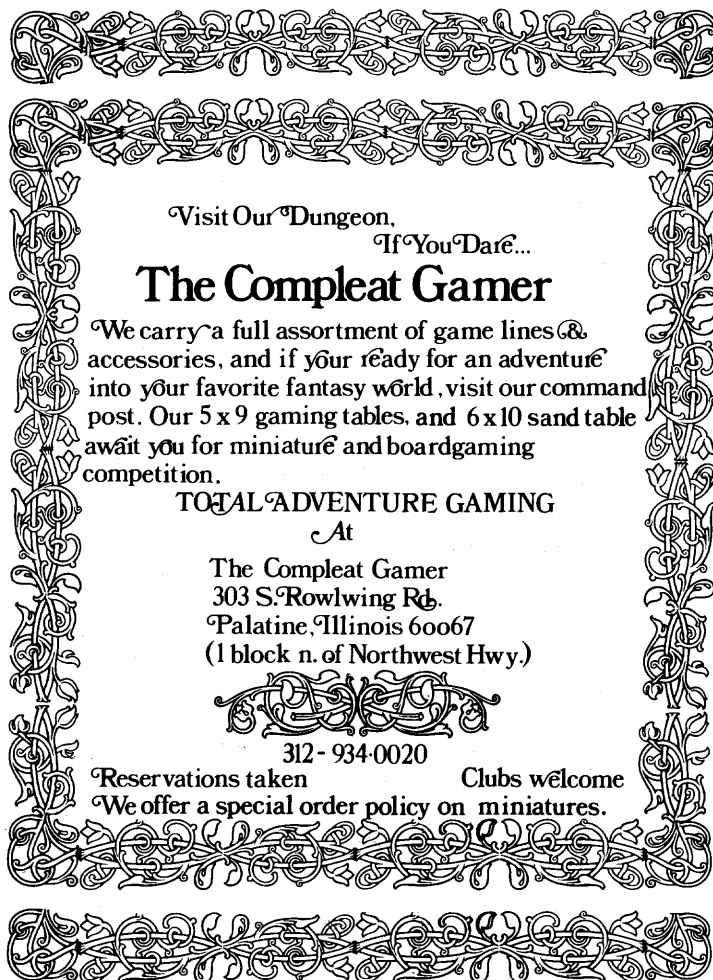
As they gained more experience, however, the Landsknecht defeats came less and less frequently. The Swiss at the same time were slipping more and more in discipline, and found that they were often hard pressed to hold back the confident Landsknecht.

To the Landsknecht, war was either good or bad. A good war was one in which they were able to take many prisoners for ransom and fatten their purses. A bad war was one in which they faced the Swiss, for they knew that quarter would be neither given nor expected.

The major difference between the Landsknecht and the Swiss remained one of ethics rather than tactics. The Landsknecht, for all their training and discipline, were mercenaries. Their loyalty would depend on the generosity of their employer, and on the way the war was going. It was not unlikely that a whole company would defect or at least refuse to fight, if they felt it was not in their best interests to do so. The Swiss, even when they fought for the French, served with fierce loyalty.

The costume of the Landsknecht was generally more garish than that of the Swiss. The mercenaries favored colorful, full blouses covered with sashes and ribbons, and huge, floppy hats gorgeously decorated with ostrich plumes. Later, toward the end of the 16th and into the 17th century, the costumes were toned down. Descriptions of Landsknecht from the 1620's usually find them wearing leather jerkins over their clothes.

All in all, the Landsknecht certainly represents one of the most interesting and colorful armies of the Renaissance, and when painted with patience and care will present a satisfying and impressive spectacle on the wargame table.



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Squad Leader

"SQUAD LEADER" IS AVALON HILL'S TRADEMARK NAME FOR ITS WORLD WAR II INFANTRY COMBAT GAME

#2: Large-scale streetfighting

Bryan Bullinger

Before introducing this month's scenario, I will present a short discussion on successful tactics—for both sides—for last month's scenario. In it, the German player had the initiative due to first movement.

Scenario #1 A Tactical Discussion

German Player: Your ability to move first allows almost complete control of the village before the Russian can enter. There is, however, a dilemma, as your initiative ends as the Russian moves in to attack. As I see it, there are two ways to defend the village—both of which rely on the initial taking of key strongpoints and establishing critical fire lanes. Both strategies require the taking of hexes R8 and T1 with squads and the heaviest MG's available. The difference then comes in either the taking of building OS or (and this depends on what the Russian is willing to give) building N1. Both approaches effectively cut off the center of the village.

Hex P2 is an excellent position with fire lanes into L3, J3, I4 and H4 and a E4 modifier against return fire from these hexes. An aggressive Russian player will have advance units within the circle after turn 1. You should anticipate Russian occupation of O5 or P4. The standard technique of cut off, soften up and smoke 'em should be sufficient to eliminate these before they can be reinforced. When

possible, make sure that you take advantage of stone buildings and wooden buildings behind walls.

Russian Player: Due to the limited number of turns, it is important to take the initiative from the German as soon as possible. Hex F5 should start with three squads and three LMG's, if available, and a leader. Six movement points allows this group to take either building O5 or P4 before the German. Additionally, the occupied building should be supported by a MMG or better and the 10-2 leader on the second level of building N1. Both positions should be reinforced and expanded as soon as possible.

There are three possible routes of attack, of which the center is necessarily one. Which flank to attack is your option—and both ways should be carefully studied before making a decision. The left flank offers the woods and hedgerows in which to move into prep fire position in hex R8, and smoke placed in hexes P7 or QS from P8 allows a rush across the road. The MG and leader in N1 should make it difficult for the German to reinforce against your attack.

To attack on the right flank requires the capture of building P2, and it is to the German's advantage to have you spend valuable time in the attempt to take it. As per the German, try to take advantage of stone buildings, wooden buildings behind walls, and use smoke to block the enemy's fire lanes.

Scenario #2

This scenario again pits the Russians and Germans in a streetfight, but on a somewhat larger scale. In this scenario, victory is determined by the number of victory points (listed in the chart below) gained by each player and whether or not they have realized their victory conditions. The streetfighting skills learned in Scenario #1 will be of immense aid to both players in this one.

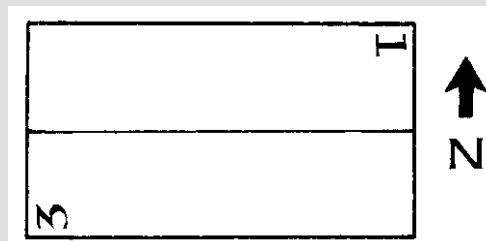
SQUAD LEADER SCENARIO #2

Rules used: Scenarios 1-5, 10 and special rules listed below

Game length: 4 hours (including 20 min.

Russian set-up limit)

Game turns: 6 turns



BOARD CONFIGURATION

Time period: April 1944—German forces move to relieve encircled comrades.

Russian Player Set-up—The Russian player sets up first. The

German player moves first and will enter on the south edge of board 3. Russian may not set up more than one AT gun and eight squads and or crews on board 3. All units may use hidden initial placement or may start concealed. Russians set up in buildings with no more than two squads and, or crew units per building.

German Player Set-up— The Russian player sets up first and the German player moves first entering in column on board 3. hex Q10. You are not required to enter all units on turn 1. Russians are known to have occupied both board's residential areas but exact locations are not known.

Victory Conditions— (1) German must have unbroken control of a road from the south edge to the north edge. Control is defined as no enemy units adjacent to road hexes. (2) Points will also be scored for destruction of enemy units. It is suggested that you set aside all the units removed from the board during play in order to facilitate the tallying of points. (3) The Russian victory condition is to prevent the German from meeting his victory conditions: maintain at least partial control of the road and score more points for destroyed units.

Special Rules (from Cross of Iron)— (1) All vehicles that enter the board on the same hex must do so sequentially, with the second vehicle paying one additional MP to enter, the third paying two additional MP's, etc. Note: Entrance via a road hex would then expend MP's of 1/2, 1 1/2, 2 1/2 etc.

(2) A captured support weapon has its Breakdown Number decreased by 2 due to lack of familiarity with the weapon and difficulty of ammunition resupply. A captured support weapon which breaks down is permanently eliminated.

(3) All attacks by captured ordnance must add a +2 DRM to all "to hit" dice rolls. Attacks by captured support weapons which do not utilize a "to hit" table have their firepower factors halved when rolling for effect on the IFT.

Russian Forces

4-4-7 (x27)	2-3-7 (x9)	6-2-8 (x6)
LMG (x5)	MMG (x2)	7-0

8-0	8-1	9-1
9-2	57mm AT gun	76mm AT gun
1 firemission of 120mm	50mm captured German AT gun	radio

Reinforcements— On Russian turn 2, the following enter on board 1, hex GG6: T-34 (x3)

German Forces

4-6-7 (x12)	8-3-8 (x3)	LMG (x9)
MMG (x3)	HMG	7-0
8-0	8-1	9-1
9-2	10-2	panzerfaust(x4)
satchel charge (x4)	MK4F1 (x2)	MK4F2 (x4)
SG III-75 (x3)	SDKfz251 armed (x4)	SDKfz251 unarmed (x2)

Note: Smoke counters are available equal to twice the number of engineers on the German order of battle.

VICTORY POINTS CHART

Destroyed Units	Points for Russian		Points for German	
	Each (Possible)	Actual	Each (Possible)	Actual
CREW	(13)		1	(12)
SQUAD	2 (24)		2	(54)
ENG/GUARD	3 (9)		3	(18)
MG	1 (13)		2	(14)
ARMOR	6 (54)		8	(24)
1/2-TRACK	4 (24)		-	—
LEADER	2 (12)		4	(20)
EQUIP	1 (8)		3	(3)
AT GUN	-		3	(12)
	(157)			(157)
ACHIEVE VICTORY	(143)			(143)
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	(300)			(300)

fantasy realism!

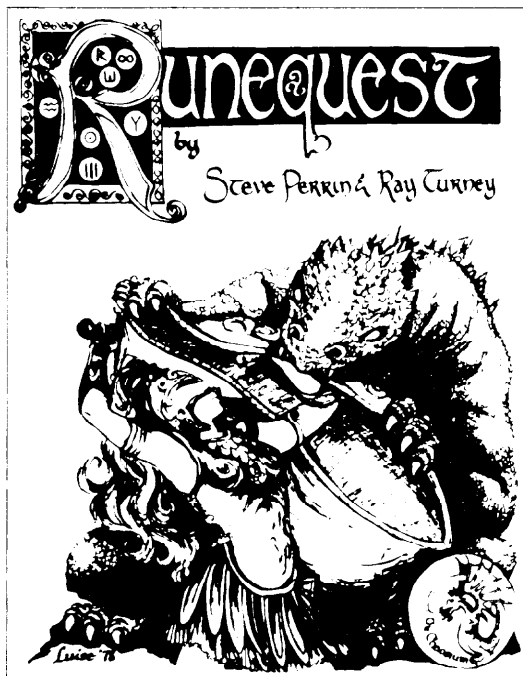
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Spell research, the hard way

Making new magic takes lots of time, lots of gold, and a little luck

T. I. Jones

Spell research is one of the most interesting aspects of *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* play—and one of the most troublesome for the DM. Since many, if not most, spell casters eventually attempt to come up with a new spell or two, the DM must give some forethought to the processes that the player (in the real world) and his or her character (in the game milieu) must go through in order to come up with new expressions of their arcane thaumaturgical power. The following system, though based upon the section on spell research in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, is slightly more complex (and, in game terms, more expensive) than the official system.

DM and Player Preparations

Guidelines on new spells are tough. It is virtually impossible to cover every case that might conceivably arise. A few parameters can be set, though. As DM, you don't want an all-purpose spell which can do almost anything to almost anything. Spells should be restricted in some way as to area or creature(s) affected. Most spells in *D&D/AD&D* that kill, maim or annihilate affect only one creature, a relatively small area, a limited number of creatures or hit dice of creatures, etc.

In order to permit thorough analysis, the player should submit to the DM a complete written description of the proposed spell and its effects (a la *Players Handbook*) including suggested level, components, area of effect, and description of its effects. The player should suggest one or more special or extraordinary components, particularly for the more powerful spells. The player should also indicate whether he or she intends to invoke supernatural aid (demons, elementals, etc.)

After the player has finished this and turned it in, the DM should analyze the spell. What are its limits? How powerful is it intended to be? What counteracts or negates the spell's effects? How many creatures/large an area will it affect? How long does the effect last? How elaborate and expensive are the material preparations for the spell? What is the casting time? How do all these factors compare with spells already in existence?

With all this in mind, the DM must decide whether to accept the spell as submitted, accept it with modifications, or reject it outright. An improved or extended version of an extant spell would be only a level or two higher. A spell combining the effects of two extant spells would be ranked at least one level higher than the sum of the levels of the two spells. It is entirely possible that the DM will decide that the spell is of a higher level than the player's character is able to research. Effects and material components may also be modified.

A DM could tell the player what he's decided—but whoever said DMs are *nice*!?! It is suggested that the player be told nothing about modifications to the spell until a substantial portion—at least 50%—of the base research time and money have been expended (see below). At that point the DM could indicate to the player that “there appears to be no way to accomplish what you've planned,” or “your research indicates that another component of unusual nature is needed, and you'll have to interrupt your research to obtain it.” This gives the player a fair chance at success, without handing out triumphs on a platinum platter.

The Character's Preparations

THE LIBRARY. [Note that the scrolls, books, et al, mentioned herein are those of the non-magical, informational sort.] Spell research requires access to a fairly extensive library of scrolls, books,

treatises, tomes, and other works on the art and science and philosophy of everything conceivable. Alchemy, astrology, astronomy, biology, botany, chemistry, geology, geometry, history, medicine, physics, physiology, and so forth are all proper concerns of the spell researcher.

This is not to imply that the player must know all these things, or that he must state exactly what he is doing, but his character in the game is assumed to be conducting research and must therefore have access to such information. This means that magical research must take place in a large city with a guild of cooperative Magic-Users, in some sort of “monastery” or retreat for Magic-Users, or in his/her own tower or castle. Basic weekly costs (see below) should be increased by 100-150% or more when research is done at a guild library or retreat, to cover room and board and maintenance costs. If there already exists a structure of guild membership fees, basic costs should still be increased by a “nominal” charge of an additional 50-75%.

Research in one's own library will require that such a library have been acquired and built up over the course of several levels of experience. It should be not only difficult but expensive to acquire such a library—a minimum expenditure of 10,000 gold pieces per level of the spell to be researched is recommended. That is, if a Magic-User is to research a second-level spell, he should have spent at least 20,000 gold pieces on his library.

It should be noted here that the sole determinant of whether a work applies to first rather than second or third or ninth spell level for research purposes is when it is bought. All works bought with the first 10,000 gold pieces are useful in the research of first-level spells. Expenditure of the next 10,000 gold pieces builds on this base and allows research of second-level spells, and so on. It is not, therefore, possible to “skip” a level, hoping, for example, to research third-level spells after spending only 20,000 gold pieces on the library.

The buying of books and scrolls must be selective, and should take a great deal of the character's game time. A typical library in a large city should contain only enough usable material to supply 10-60% of the library necessary to research first, second or third-level spells; 10-40% for fourth, fifth or sixth-level spells; and only 5-30% of the library for seventh, eighth or ninth-level spells.

The first 50% of each spell level of the library should be relatively easy to track down, requiring one game day per percentage point of searching (this assumes free access to the library, of course). The next 40% becomes harder to find due to the increasing duplication of information, and requires two game days per percentage point. The final 10% of the library is so difficult to search out that it requires an entire week per percentage point.

Once the desired material has been ferreted out, copies must be made. Remember that medieval-style libraries are not bookstores; extra copies of manuscripts are not kept around “just in case” someone wants them. As with all other facets of the task, the copying process will be expensive and time-consuming. Each 10% of the library available (as indicated by the preceding paragraph) requires the expenditure of 1,000 gold pieces, which buys (80% chance) 7-10 scrolls or similar works or (20% chance) 1-4 books, tomes, or the like. Each scroll will take one month to copy; a book requires one month per 100 gold pieces of value to copy. A library will assign 1-4 scribes to the project, to a maximum of one scribe per work (scroll, book, or other). Additional scribes will be assigned upon payment of an additional 10% of the total cost of the project per scribe, but the maximum of one scribe per work must be observed.

Errors often crop up during the laborious process of hand-copying which the scribes employ. There is a 10% chance for substantial error

in a reference work for research on spell levels one through three, 20% for levels four through six, and 40% for levels seven through nine. Each additional one month of game time and 100 gold pieces expended on a work over and above the minimum required will reduce the chance for error by 8%. There is, however, always a minimum chance for error—2%, 4% and 8% respectively.

Each work which has an error will reduce by 1% the base chance for success in spell research (see below). Therefore, the DM should keep a record of these errors and the spell level(s) they affect. (As the contents of the library are additive, errors in the lower levels of spell research material will affect the chance of success at all higher levels of research.) Records should also be kept of the total number of works in the library and the total amount of gold expended on it.

If a work is simultaneously being copied and translated from another language, the chance for error should be doubled or tripled (at the DM's discretion). The DM may desire to place special ancient texts of arcane lore and forbidden knowledge in his dungeons, or allow characters to come across such works "accidentally" while shopping the bazaars along the caravan route to the mystic east. In such cases, copying time equals study time and the chance for a copying error should be treated as a chance that the player character will misunderstand the work; increasing the amount of time spent studying the work will decrease the chance for such a misunderstanding, as noted above for copying errors.

When research is carried out in another's library and details on the number of errors are unavailable, assume that 1-10 works per spell level have a chance for containing substantial error. Roll for each work at twice the minimums given above for error, i.e. 4%, 8% and 16% for the three categories of spell research material.

THE LABORATORY. The library allows the spell caster to research basic knowledge and to glean ideas on how to proceed in his search for a new spell, but the actual trial-and-error work of spell research must be done in a properly equipped laboratory. At higher levels of experience, this laboratory can also be used in the fabrication of potions and other magic items. The *Dungeon Masters Guide*, page 116, provides a good description of the construction and maintenance of such a laboratory. Note that "special provisions" would be any material components of unusual nature required for the casting of the new spell (fresh dragon blood and ground lich skull, for example, are hardly common!) and "special protections" would include such things as lead-lined walls and magic circles of protection to keep out prying eyes and evil creatures.

The Research Process

The first question to be settled is whether the character is capable of successfully researching the proposed spell. The character must be at least one experience level higher than the level necessary to cast spells equivalent to the proposed spell, i.e. second level to research first-level spells, fourth experience level to research second-level spells, sixth level to research third-level spells, and so forth. The character must have spent a sufficient quantity of gold on his or her library to allow basic research of spells of the necessary level (10,000 gold pieces per spell level), or he must have access to such a library. The laboratory must be fully stocked; special or extraordinary components must have been obtained. Spell research may now commence.

Spell research absolutely must be carried out in near-total privacy and isolation, uninterrupted by adventuring, audiences with subjects or retainers, shopping for food, or any other such heroic or mundane activities. The character is therefore effectively eliminated from active campaigning for the duration of the research period. Any interruption will negate all previous work, and the research process must be begun again from scratch. Research at a guild or retreat satisfies this requirement for privacy, but if done in his or her own library the character must employ persons to act as guards, servants, etc. The character will, of course, be unable to supervise the activities of these retainers to ensure the performance of their duties; a trusted henchman would come in handy for that purpose.

BASIC COSTS—TIME AND MONEY. The base cost of spell research is one game week per spell level and 1,000 gold pieces per

spell level per week; this yields a 10% chance of success. From this base percentage figure are subtracted penalties accruing due to errors in the library. Percentile dice are rolled when the base research period has been completed and, if the character is unsuccessful, research may continue as long as the character's money holds out. In this case, the percentile dice are rolled at the end of each succeeding week.

If the character is of an experience level at least twice the minimum at which spells of the appropriate level may be researched (i.e. fourth experience level for first-level spells, eighth for second-level spells, and so on) then the character is permitted to double both base time and gold expended to two weeks per spell level and 2,000 gold pieces per spell level per week—and thereby obtain a doubling of the base chance for success to 20%.

Each such factorial increase in the experience level of the researcher allows for a corresponding increase in both time and money expended to produce an increase in the base chance for success to 30%, 40% and even 50% at five times the base experience level (that would be 10th experience level to research first-level spells, 20th level for second-level spells, 30th level for third-level spells!). In such cases, the entire base time must elapse before checking for success. For example, a sixth-level Magic-User expending three weeks and 3,000 gold pieces per week to research a first-level spell must complete the entire three weeks before rolling the percentile dice to check for success. In addition, if the character is unsuccessful after completing the base research period, research must continue for two, three, four or five weeks, depending on the multiplier used for the base research costs, before a further check for success may be made.

When spell research has been completed, whether successful or not, the researcher *must* rest a minimum of one day per week spent in the research process. The DM may choose to require additional rest time if the research process involved the summoning of supernatural aid or other such debilitating activity.

Clerical Research

Because Clerics receive most of their spell powers through divine favor, their research process is slightly different. The Cleric must acquire a library (or have access to one) composed of theological dissertations and prayers and meditations to the character's deity or deities. The value of the library is only 5,000 gold pieces per level for first and second spell level material and 1,000 gold pieces per level for third through seventh spell level material. In addition, the Cleric must have spent 10,000 gold pieces per spell level for vestments and altar vessels, censers, holy/unholy symbols and the like.

Clerical research on first or second-level spells may take place in any private or secluded place of the character's choice after first casting *Bless*, *Protection from Evil/Good* and *Sanctuary*, followed by a prayer to the deity. If the research is to take place in a shrine or similar place already dedicated to the deity, this process will be unnecessary.

Research on third, fourth and fifth-level spells requires that the Cleric must have established a private chapel dedicated to the deity of at least 200 square feet in area. Because the Cleric must contact his or her deity directly to obtain sixth or seventh-level spells, he or she must have previously established a religious stronghold (page 20 of the *Players Handbook*) which should also include a private chapel of at least 400 square feet in area.

Clerical spells rarely require any material component other than the Cleric's holy/unholy symbol, but quests, voluntary deeds and sacrifices are often demanded when some new high-level spell is requested of the deity or its minions. When such a sacrifice or action is required of the character, the DM should inform the player of the deity's decision after the base research period has been completed. The character must then accomplish the deed, return and perform another week of prayers. Then the percentile dice are rolled to determine success. The DM should feel free to adjust the base chance for success to account for half-hearted or exemplary performance of the required action. In no case is this to be construed as a license for general adventuring. If the character should be so foolish as to stray from his or her task in order to pick up a little extra gold and experience, treat it as an interruption of the research process—all previous work goes for naught.

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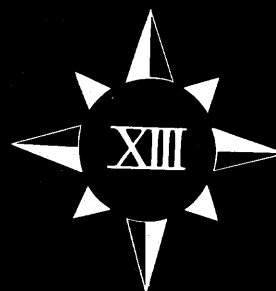
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Libraries

A sure cure for "bookworm" players who must know everything

Colleen A. Bishop

One of the most trying situations a DM can face is the overinquisitive party. Its members simply *must* poke their noses, swords, etc. into everything, especially any libraries that they happen to come across. And they want to know the contents of every book. The popular DM's excuses of "the paper crumbles as you touch it", "it's in a language you can't read", and "the ink is too faded to read" wear thin after a time. I find it more challenging (and interesting) to tell the players just what they are finding.

Since bookbinding was a difficult art (especially without modern staples) in medieval times, and printing machines are unknown in most *D&D* games, the majority of literary works were handwritten on scrolls. Some few were actually bound into books, mostly the "important" things (but what a particular castleowner felt was important and what your players feel is important may be two different things).

In any case, I have found the following system useful in developing libraries:

Shelves: There are generally 4-8 shelves in any 6-foot wide section of wall, and a good-sized library may have 36-90 feet of shelf-covered walls.

On any particular shelf (I suggest you number them for easy reference), you will find:

Die roll	# of items	Item
01-95	10-100	Scrolls
96-99	1-10	Books
00	1-4	Tomes

Scrolls: You may assume that all scrolls on a single shelf have to do with one topic, as most librarians have a fairly efficient cataloging system. Scroll topics may include (this is by no means a complete list):

Die roll Item

- 01-20 Elvish poetry (01-80, in elvish; 81-95, in common tongue; 96-99, another language the party has heard of; 00, in an unknown language)
- 21-40 Dwarvish armor making— (extremely technical, only truly understandable by armorers who speak dwarvish).
- 41-46 Diary page
- 47-56 Love letters (may be in common, elvish, orcish, etc.)
- 57-66 Accountant records (columns of numbers)
- 67-94 Historical records
- 95-96 Indelible paper (These scrolls were generally favored scrolls of the owner, and were magically enchanted so as to never rot or suffer faded ink. They show up under a Detect Magic spell. Reroll for topic of scroll.)
- 97-00 Magic scroll (DM's choice; reroll for topic of all other scrolls on a certain shelf, since magic scrolls are supposed to be rare and should never occur more than once per shelf.)

Books: Roll once for each book on a particular shelf. Again, this is not a complete list.

Die roll Item

- 01-09 Alchemist's notebook (01-83, handwriting too difficult to read; 84-88, incomplete directions for experiments; 89-93, all experiments marked "FAILURE"; 94-99, written almost entirely in chemical symbols; 00, as 94-99, but with a translation page of chemical symbols to common tongue included. Instructions are usable if the materials are available; Alchemists were notorious for using such things as powdered dragontooth, sliced gelatinous blobs, and the horn of the blue unicorn in their formulas.)
- 10-25 History of a land
- 26-42 History of a castle
- 43-59 Religious book (simple prayers)
- 60-65 Diary
- 66-75 Herbal (listing of local plants and their supposed properties)
- 76-85 Bestiary (descriptions of local beasts)
- 86-89 Collection of elvish poetry
- 90-97 Humanitarians (anthropologists) report on the inferiority of orcs, kobolds, etc. to the races of man, elf, dwarf, etc. (or vice versa)
- 98-00 Magical book, roll again on tables in *DMG*.

Tomes: Tomes are generally very large, thick books with tooled leather covers and locks to keep them shut. Many are magical, and all are extremely rare.

Die roll Item

- 01-15 Magic-User's tome of spells from first to ninth level (essentially, a very high-level Wizard's spellbook)
- 16-30 Religious tome, including 5 Clerical spells from each level 1-7. May be of an alignment, but the spells should reflect that alignment.
- 31-61 Demonologist's tome, including all Magic-User and Clerical spells for summoning, controlling, dispelling, and turning demons, as well as lore about the demons most likely to be encountered. Should be written in Chaotic Evil or Neutral Evil.
- 62-76 Tome of Burning. This includes all spells (MU, Cleric, Druid, Illusionist) involving fire, its control, and its creation.
- 77-00 Tome of Cold. This includes all spells involving the creation of control of cold.

Most tomes were also guarded, many by locks, many by spells.

For any particular tome:

Die roll Guarded by

- 01-40 1-4 locks only
- 41-80 1-4 spells only
- 81-00 1-4 locks plus 1-4 spells

Tome locks include such types as:

Die roll Lock type

- 01-20 Simple key lock
- 21-40 Hidden lock, needs a part of the design pressed to release to catch.
- 41-55 Combination (dial) lock
- 56-75 Hidden combination lock, requires design pressed in a certain combination to release catch.
- 76-95 Hidden combination lock, as above, but only reveals keyhole (does not release catch).
- 96-00 Word lock. To open it, the name of the tome must be pronounced. The name is generally inscribed on the cover of the tome in an obscure language.

If there are two locks or more, at least one is trapped in some way, such as with poison.

Tome Guardian Spells are generally curses, but tend to be 50% longer lasting, or 50% more effective and difficult to dispel. These spells may be deactivated for 15 minutes by performing a *Remove Curse* spell, a *Bless* spell, or a complicated passing of the hands over the tome (DM's discretion) for each guardian spell involved.

Convention Schedule 1980

GROSSMONT COLLEGE RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL (May 8-11, 1980)—Medieval costume, dancing and music exhibits and presentations, plus demonstrations by the San Diego and Los Angeles chapters of the Society for Creative Anachronism. For further information, contact Jodi Stump, c/o Grossmont College, 8800 Grossmont Drive, El Cajon CA 92020.

NEW CON 2 (May 23-25, 1980)—A general gaming convention sponsored by the Toy Soldier Shop of Newburyport, Mass. to be held at the West Newbury Town Hall, Route 113, West Newbury MA 01985. For more information, contact The Toy Soldier, 1 Temple St., Newburyport MA 01950.

GENGHIS CON II (May 23-26, 1980)—Sponsored by Denver Gamers Association, to be held at Colorado Women's College, Montview Blvd. at Quebec, Denver CO. Dormitory lodging available. Contact: Genghis Con II, 2527 Gaylord, Denver CO 80205, or call Mark (303)761-2465 or Alex (303)798-1404.

BLOODY SUNDAY '80 (May 25, 1980)—A day of wargaming and socializing scheduled to be held at the Waterloo Regional Police Association Recreational Centre, R.R. 2, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada. Information is available from Les Scanlon, president, MIGS. 473 Upper Wentworth, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

GRIMCON II (May 25-28, 1980)—This fantasy and science-fiction gaming convention will be held at the Hyatt Edgewater Hotel in Oakland, Calif. Information is available by writing to GRIMCON, 1749 Sonoma Ave., Berkeley CA 94707.

MICHICON IX (June 6-8, 1980)—Another gala production by the Metro Detroit Gamers, to be held at Oakland University in Rochester, Mich. For advance information, write: Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 787, Troy MI 48099.

X-CON IV (June 6-8, 1980)—Milwaukee's fourth annual science fiction and fantasy convention, to be held at the Red Carpet Inn in Milwaukee. Advance registration is \$7.50 through May 15, \$10 after that date. Contact: X-Con IV, c/o Todd Voros, 6107 W. Lisbon, Milwaukee WI 53210.

ORIGINS '80 (June 27-29, 1980)—To be held at Widener University, Chester, Pa. Limited housing available. Registration forms and other information available from Origins '80, P.O. Box 139, Middletown NJ 07748.

EMPIRICON II/CON-SPIRACY (July 4-6, 1980)—A science fiction/gaming convention oriented toward fantasy role-playing games, to be held at the Prince George Hotel, 14 E. 28th St., New York NY. For more information, contact: Empiricon II/Con-Spiracy, P.O. Box 682, Church St. Station. New York NY 10008.

Bus service to Origins

The Citadel in Groton, CT, is sponsoring a bus to Origins '80 for convention-goers in the Massachusetts-Connecticut area. Anyone interested should send a \$15 deposit to The Citadel, 171 Bridge St., Groton, CT 06340. The seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, and deposits will be returned to those who do not apply in time. All correspondence to The Citadel should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a return message.

The bus will leave the Worcester, MA, area at 7 a.m. on Friday, June 27, with stops later in the day in the New London, CT, and Bridgeport, CT, areas, before proceeding onward to Widener University in Chester, PA. Details of the schedule and other arrangements will be made available to those who reserve seats.

According to Pat Flory, owner of The Citadel, "We expect there will be openings (on the bus) through May, but do not advise chancing it."

NANCON 88-II (July 4-6, 1980)—One of the largest gaming conventions in the Southwest, sponsored by Nan's Toys and Games of Houston, Tex. The site is the Holiday Inn at 6701 S. Main St. in Houston. Information is available from Nan's Toys and Games, 1385 Galleria Mall, 5015 Westheimer, Houston TX 77056.

PHRINGECON (July 11-13, 1980)—To be held at the Adamas Hotel, Phoenix AZ; a convention "for the fringes of SF fandom." Special guests to include Stan Lee and George (Sulu) Takei. Contact: PhringeCon, P.O. Box 1072, Phoenix AZ 85001.

GLASC V (July 11-13, 1980)—Greater Los Angeles Simulation Convention; to be held at the Airport Marina Hotel, Los Angeles, sponsored by Simulation Gamers Association, San Fernando Valley, CA. Contact: L. Daniel, 7048 Keokuk Ave., Canoga Park CA 91306.

INTERNATIONAL SPACE: 1999 ALLIANCE CON '80 (July 25-27, 1980)—A gathering for fans of Space: 1999 and other science-fiction television programs (not including *Star Trek*); some gaming included. To be held in Columbus, Ohio. For information, write to Kathy & John von Kamp, 86 First St., New London OH 44851.

MAINECON '80 (July 25-27, 1980)—Sponsored by the Maine Wargamers Association, to be held in the ballroom of the Eastland Hotel in Portland, ME. Contact: John Wheeler, Mainecon '80 convention director, 102 Front St., Bath, ME 04530, phone (207) 443-3711.

CWA-CON '80 (Aug. 1-3, 1980)—A convention for dealers and game players, sponsored by the Chicago Wargamers Association. To be held at the College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Ill. Duke Seifried of Heritage Models will be among the special guests. For more information, contact Chicago Wargamers Association, 3605 Bobolink, Rolling Meadows IL 60008, telephone (312) 394-5618.

BANGOR AREA WARGAMERS ANNUAL CONVENTION (Aug. 2-3, 1980)—To be held at the Memorial Union at the University of Maine, Orono, ME. University housing available. Contact Edward F. Stevens Jr., 13 South Street, Rockland ME 04841, telephone (207) 594-6242.

KAISER WARGAMER'S FIRST STRIKE (Aug. 30, 1980)—One-day gathering to be held at the Fontana Kaiser Steel Plant. Information is available from Mark J. Shocklee, 11262 Barton Road, Apt. B, Loma Linda, CA 92354.

PACIFICON '80 (Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 1980)—The largest dealer/manufacturer convention on the west coast. Will be held at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo, Calif. More information is available from David G. Hinkley, publicity chairman, Pacificon, P.O. Box 5833, San Jose CA 95150, phone (408)374-9770 or (408) 371-4229.

RIDES NEEDED/RIDES OFFERED

With the convention season fast approaching, TSR Periodicals and *The Dragon* will be offering, as a service to our readers, free listing of requests for rides and offers for rides to the various 1980 conventions. If you're looking for a ride or would like to offer a ride, drop a card to: RIDES, c/o TSR Periodicals, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. State the convention you're interested in, your name and address, and any other pertinent information (day leaving, returning, etc.). We'll list as many names as possible each month. And here's the first:

RIDE OFFERED: I am going to GenCon '80 from Burlington, Vermont and can take three riders from Vermont or the Adirondacks in exchange for help with gas and tolls. If interested write me immediately: Shar Fortier, 27 N. Winooski Ave., Burlington, VT 05401.

StarMaster

Air screams around your ships as they enter the atmosphere. Missile-launchers fire dealeningly to port and starboard while atmosphere-fighters drop in shrieking dives from their hangers below. Warriors, tightly clenching their weapons, check their pressure suits one last time and climb in grim silence into their landing shuttles. In the distance five more heavy cruisers of your empire are firing and unloading their cargo, their hulls gleaming crimson in the light of the red sun above.

This is not a drill. Already laser and missile fire from the mile-wide guardian fortresses below have turned the sky into an exploding nightmare of smoke, fire, and fragmented metal. Planes and shuttles twist and dodge down towards a landscape rapidly becoming an inferno of flame and radiation.

This is no mere raid. For years your people had explored nearby systems without violence, trading technology to the primitive civilizations there in exchange for raw materials. Some species had even thought you gods.

Then you met the Aeratang. Merciless, brutal, they destroyed your exploring ships and began to slaughter your colonies. But you found their home planet and launched the greatest fleet your kind ever built to carry the war to your enemy. To fight for your very survival.

Will it be enough?

Starmaster is a correspondence game of galactic exploration, diplomacy, and conquest allowing for interaction not only between each player and the worlds of the galaxy, but between the players themselves.

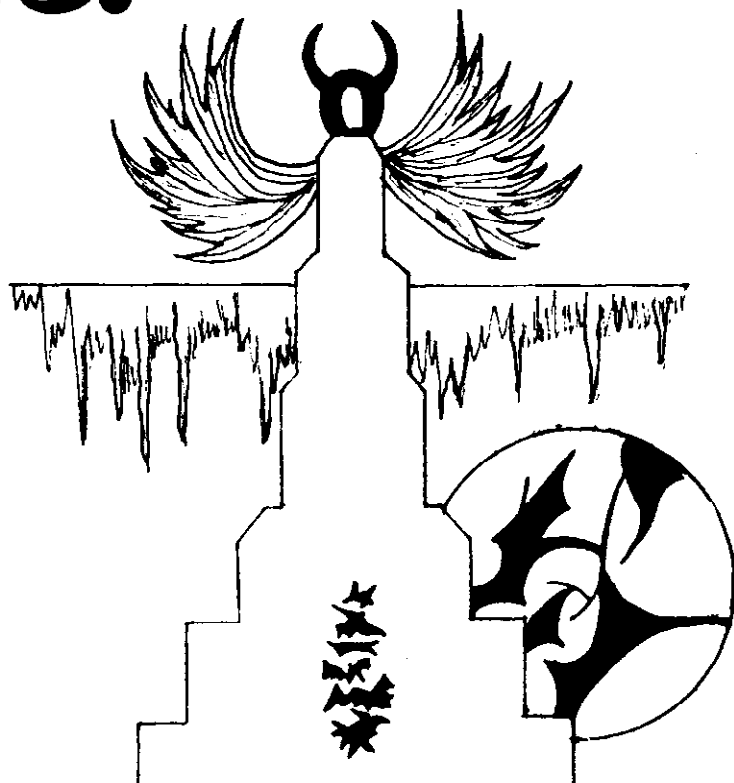
New players begin further out from the Galactic Center than established players allowing them to develop themselves among equals. You may lead a powerful reptilian race, carving out a vast empire of colony and subject worlds; or perhaps an insectoid species, engaged in a holy crusade to convert the galaxy to the worship of their many-legged god.

As chosen ruler of your people, you must decide what diplomatic and military policies will be followed in order to lead your kind to dominance among the sentient beings of the galaxy.

The galaxies of StarMaster are a complete fantasy environment of solar systems, with geographies ranging from worlds near absolute zero to worlds where rivers of molten tungsten bubble, with technologies spanning from rock-throwing cave-dwellers to advanced Elder Races with near-godlike abilities.

Nor is the StarMaster environment limited in terms of playing area. There are multiple galaxies allowing for extra-galactic invasions across the voids. There are both natural and constructed gateways to (and from!) other dimensions and parallel universes.

StarMaster is limitless in possibilites, bounded only by imagination! It is a game where, literally, anything is possible.



StarMaster offers these features:

- Design your species as if you could have directed evolution to this moment.
- Design your homeworld in terms of temperature, atmosphere, and mass.
- Choose your government and social order.
- You decide the production for all worlds of your empire, building colonizing ships, merchantmen, warships, warriors, and fortresses.
- Technology increases steadily, permitting faster, larger ships, deadlier weapons, and scientific breakthroughs.

The galaxies are dotted with the ruins of Elder civilizations lacking the strength to master the stars. Can you lead your world to greatness where so many others fell short?

StarMaster may be entered for \$10.00 which includes the first three turns, a rule booklet, and all necessary material (except return postage). Thereafter, turns are \$2.50 each. If dissatisfied after the first turn, you may return the material for a full refund. A rule booklet may be purchased separately for \$3.50.

Send to: **Schubel & Son**

P.O. Box 214848
Sacramento, CA 95821

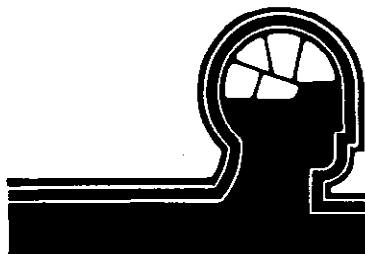
Enter me in StarMaster

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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EYE OF THE DRAGON

HOBBY INDUSTRY NEWS

NEW RELEASES

LATEST FROM SPI -- Simulations Publications, Inc., will blaze three new trails in the science fiction/fantasy game marketplace in June, when Time-Tripper, Against 4 Worlds, & Dragonslayer will be put on sale.

TimeTripper chronicles the exploits of a U.S. soldier in Vietnam who is suddenly thrust into a flux in time, and must search for a way to return to the present while battling opponents from many locations in the past and future. The "Team Tripper" version can be played by up to four persons at the same time.

Against 4 Worlds is a game of strategic and tactical battles between the forces of Earth and the Band of Traders, an alliance of four alien races who try to trample the upstart Earthlings before they can gain a good foothold in deep-space-exploration. It uses the tactical battle system first seen in SPI's Battlefleet: Mars.

Dragonslayer will be SPI's first entry into the realm of fantasy role-playing games. Players take the roles of journeyman heroes, adventuring in a fantasy world created by the "games-master." The game includes a tactical combat display, cardboard playing pieces, and all the literature and playing aids necessary to create a world and the characters who set forth into it.

NEW PRODUCTS

COMPUTER BISMARCK -- Now, as proclaimed by Strategic Simulations, Inc., you can "sink the Bismarck with your Apple."

No, this is not a game about giant fruit. It is a computerized historical simulation of the British attempt to find and scuttle the Bismarck in 1941. The game program disc is playable on an Apple II Plus unit, and will soon be available for the TRS-80 and other home computers.

It can be used solitaire, with the computer playing the German commander, or it can be a two-player duel between the British Home Fleet and the German Kriegsmarine. There are eight different types of sea and air vehicles to be deployed, and special rules cover every aspect of the naval campaign, from weather to ship fuel capacities. The Hood sure could have used one...

MORE NICE DICE -- There's good news and bad news from Lou Zocchi and Gamescience, dice dealer extraordinaire.

The good news is Sapphire dice, Topaz dice, and glow-in-the-dark Fireball dice -- new creations for your collection, tentatively scheduled for release in May, June and July, respectively. Lou, being a cautious man, emphasizes the word "tentatively"; after all, there are a lot of facets to the dice business...

The bad news is that the new dice and the old dice will all cost more, as of now. The price increase, necessary due to the increasing cost of petroleum by-products, has been passed on to store owners who are serviced by Gamescience, and they in turn are passing it on to you-know-who -- you.

NEW LINE

DUNGEON DWELLERS -- D&Ders who want more quantity and variety in their stables of miniature figures probably already know about Dungeon Dwellers, the large new line of metal monsters and characters produced by Heritage.

The introductory series has been in stores for several weeks, and Heritage plans more releases for June and August to round it out. There are five boxed "Action Adventure" sets, which together provide every character and monster for Basic D&D. Individual figure packs, numbering 56 so far, enable the player or collector to buy specific characters and monsters.

HAPPENINGS

TSR BRANCHES OUT -- Gamers in Merrye Olde England now have reason to be even merrier than before. TSR Hobbies, Inc., has formed a new subsidiary in the United Kingdom, TSR Hobbies U.K., Ltd. The Chief Executive Officer is Don Turnbull, one of England's leading game hobbyists and the founder of Perfidious Albion, one of the foremost gaming journals in the British Isles.

The firm's main purpose will be the sale and distribution of TSR products within the United Kingdom. The new organizational setup will make it much easier and more efficient for retailers in Britain to obtain D&D material as well as the rest of the TSR line, which will benefit individual consumers by providing wider and speedier availabil-

ity of game merchandise on the shelves of their favorite stores.

AH GOES ELECTRONIC -- The Avalon Hill Game Company isn't forsaking cardboard counters and mapboards, but neither is AH ignoring the vast potential of the computer/electronic game. In order to serve the more technological aspects of the hobby, Avalon Hill has formed a separate company, Microcomputer Games, Inc., which will produce computer programming and cassette tape packages to allow a wider variety of games to be played on home computers.

AH Executive Vice President Tom Shaw is the head of the new company. Specific information on the first releases from Microcomputer Games, Inc., is eagerly awaited.

TEKUMEL GOES SOUTH -- Empire of the Petal Throne, one of the pioneer games in the fantasy role-playing field, is now the property of Gamescience (Lou Zocchi, president) of Gulfport, Miss. The rights to produce and market the game, which were originally held by TSR Hobbies, Inc., were sold to Gamescience recently. Further word from the versatile Mr. Zocchi on plans for the "new EPT" should be forthcoming.



"EYE OF THE DRAGON" is produced as a public service by TSR Periodicals to keep game players and hobbyists up to date on happenings from all outposts in the game-hobby industry. Information from all sources will be eagerly accepted, and will be selected for the "Eye" on the basis of immediacy and overall importance to the readership. Address all press releases and other correspondence to "Eye of The Dragon," P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147.



GIANTS IN THE EARTH

CLASSIC HEROES FROM FICTION & LITERATURE

(Editor's preface: The "Giants in The Earth" article printed below is obviously not of the usual type. It is, instead, the authors' description of the rationale behind their system of tabulating extraordinary abilities for the GITE heroes.)

The manuscript grew out of a letter to the editor submitted by Tom Moldvay to *The Dragon* shortly after the appearance of a letter concerning that subject. It has been amended by the authors to include much more explanatory material, and at the end is a list of possible future characters to depict in the GITE feature. Readers are invited to express preferences for any of these or any other famous heroes by writing to *The Dragon*.)

Lawrence Schick
and Tom Moldvay

To answer Craig Stenseth's question concerning Giants in the Earth from *The Dragon* #30, exceptional percentages for 18's, for all other abilities than strength, are given mainly for comparison purposes. They are not standard *D&D* or *AD&D*. They might, however, be useful to DMs who run a local *D&D* variant which differentiates between levels of 18 for all abilities.

As far as writing up the characters from Tolkien's Ring Trilogy, we would love to try our hand at them. Unfortunately, the Tolkien estate is known to be fanatically paranoid about the slightest possible infringement of rights (whether real or imagined). We were also unwilling to attempt them because 90% of the Tolkien fans would be unhappy with the results, regardless of what they were. In the end, we decided it was simply too much hassle to write up Tolkien characters.

We are, however, willing to attempt any specific characters which *The Dragon* readers would like done, provided we can find the manuscript the characters appear in, and as long as the author or author's estate is willing.

We would also like to clarify some problems raised by comments in the Sorcerer's Scroll in *The Dragon* #30. Concerning Cugel's wisdom rating, we wrote Cugel's statistics before the publication of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*. At the time, we weren't entirely sure what "wisdom" implied. The word has several possible meanings. We decided to take wisdom to mean inspiration, i.e. that force in each individual which responds to the "god within," and which serves to funnel godly power through a cleric. We considered that wisdom, as defined as common sense, had little to do with clerical abilities. We felt that Cugel was above average in inspiration, but abysmally lacking in common sense.

As defined in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, wisdom "subsumes the categories of willpower, judgment, wile, enlightenment, and intuitiveness." With the above definition in mind, we would recommend lowering Cugel's wisdom rating to 8.

The second point raised in the Sorcerer's Scroll is more difficult to answer. Exactly how powerful is a heroic, legendary character? Some mythological heroes rank as demi-gods (Heracles, Gilgamesh, and Gwydion, for example). In particular, Gary Gygax felt that Kane was too powerful and advocated a reduction in levels.

A case could be argued that we made Kane too weak. Kane has lived for several thousands of years. It would not be unreasonable to assign him 50 times the experience a character would acquire in a

normal lifetime. Such experience could run to 100 million experience points or more. Kane, as described in the article, need have acquired only 12 million experience points in *AD&D* or 5 million experience points in *AD&D*. If we carried out his experience to the admittedly absurd logical conclusion, Kane would indeed be unbeatable.

Experience points aside, a heroic character must fit into the play balance. Few things are more frustrating to players than an encounter where the "monster" cannot be defeated, avoided, tricked, or in some way placated when hostile. In our character descriptions, we usually try to give possible "outs" to the party if brute force is inadvisable. We also believe that any DM is qualified to modify the heroes to fit his particular campaign, using the guidelines in our character descriptions.

The heart of the problem of play balance and heroic "toughness" is the difference between the *AD&D* and *D&D* experience tables. A character who has earned enough experience points to rank as a 30th-level Magic-User in *D&D* would, with the same amount of experience points, rank as only a 15th-level Magic-User in *AD&D*. The other professional experience tables show similar discrepancies. In effect, the modified experience tables insure fewer high-level characters in *AD&D* than in *D&D*, with such characters being generally lower in level than their *D&D* counterparts.

When Gary Gygax warns readers about the generally overly high rating of the heroes in *Giants in the Earth*, he is (we believe) speaking from a strict *AD&D* viewpoint. We would certainly agree that any DM running an *AD&D* high-level campaign should use the heroes in the series with caution, and lower the experience levels if the DM judges the dungeon party too weak to encounter the hero as printed.

The origin of *Giants in the Earth* goes back to a series of high-level adventures run in the Kent-Akron (Ohio) area before any of the *AD&D* books were on the market. We needed to fill a gap between the tougher monsters and the gods. Most of the players were raised on fantasy and science fiction, so heroes from literature seemed an ideal answer. At that time, of necessity, all player characters used the *D&D* experience tables. It was not unusual for a player character to be 20th level or higher.

The ten heroes we first submitted to *The Dragon* drew heavily on our experience from high-level *D&D* campaigns. These heroes have set the standard for the continuing series, since we prefer the heroes to be compatible with one another.

We usually try to compromise between *D&D* and *AD&D*, and hopefully we reach a median useful to all players. Still, a DM is advised to use discretion before including heroes from literature in any particular campaign. Furthermore, DMs should feel free to make any and all changes they feel necessary to fit heroes into their distinctive campaign, or to bring the heroes closer to the DM's opinion of any character gained from reading the literature.

As an aid to DMs, we have included the following table as a guideline to the different degrees of "high-level" in both *D&D* and *AD&D*. Again, we caution that the table reflects only our opinion, and is not "official" for either *D&D* or *AD&D*.

<u>AD&D Level</u>	<u>D&D Level</u>	<u>Approximate Guideline</u>
21+	40+	Equivalent to demi-god status, usually

		only for a character with a magically extended life, often one who deals intimately with the gods.
17-20	30-39	The maximum an exceptional character would usually obtain in a single lifetime.
13-16	20-29	Average for a character of heroic proportions.
9-12	10-19	The normal minimum for any hero. The range usually referred to as "mid-level."

\$5.00

The Trap Manual

for those desiring inspiration
in the creation of unusual
and deadly traps.

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Tell them you saw it in the Dragon

1-4	1-4	Cannon fodder in most high-level campaigns. The range usually referred to as "low-level."
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Possible Suggestions for Future Giants in the Earth

D'Artagnan & The Three Musketeers (Alexandre Dumas)
 Jirel of Joiry (C. L. Moore)
 Kickaha & Anana (Philip Jose Farmer)
 Modesty Blaise & Willie Garvin (Peter O'Donnell)
 Kardios (Manly Wade Wellman)
 Vazkor (Tanith Lee)
 Oscar Gordon (Robert A. Heinlein)
 Jorian (L. Sprague de Camp)
 Ryre (J. Ramsey Campbell)
 Taran (Lloyd Alexander)
 Lessingham (E.R. Eddison)
 Vanye and Morgaine (C.J. Cheryth)
 Corum, etc. (Michael Moorcock)
 Valeria, etc. (Robert E. Howard)
 Elak (Henry Kuttner)
 Skafloc (Poul Anderson)
 Prince Valiant (Hal Foster)
 Tiger (Ron L. Hubbard)
 Sir Geros Lahvoheetos (Robert Adams)
 Dracula (Bram Stoker)
 Abdul Alhazred (H.P. Lovecraft)
 Prospero (John Bellairs)

The above list is in no way exhaustive, representing suggestions "off the top of our heads." A little research (such as sitting down and taking a close look at our paperback libraries) would undoubtedly reveal dozens of more possibilities.

Sorcerer's Scroll

(From page 11)

Heavy Cavalry: 50 (Guards)
 Medium Cavalry: 100 (Elite)
 Light Cavalry: 50 (Regulars)
 Medium Horse Archers: 100 (Regulars)

Armored Infantry: 50 (Guards)
 Heavy Infantry: 100 (Regulars)
 Light Infantry: 100 (Levied)
 Heavy Archers: 50 (Regulars)
 Light Archers: 50 (Levied)

Tenser is accompanied by a high-level cleric and various other figures of relatively high level, some reported to be demi-human. Some say that the ranger, Otis, is with him. The force is Good in alignment, but its exact disposition is unknown. It is suspected that troops from the surrounding area will join with Tenser in time of need.

The Unnamed (Known as "Erac's Cousin"; MU of at least 16th level): This very malign individual was once a servant of Good, but in being captured by a demon and subsequently escaping, he bitterly turned from his former deity for failing him in need, and he now serves Hell with will and enthusiasm. "Erac's Cousin" is seldom seen without a red-eyed rat upon his shoulder. It is also stated that this mage is able to wield a sword with great proficiency (6th level fighting ability!). Reputed forces are:

Medium Cavalry: 50 (Guards)
 Light Cavalry: 50 (Regulars)
 Light Horse Archers: 50 (Regulars)
 Heavy Infantry: 100 (Regulars)
 Heavy Archers: 100 (Regulars)
 Pole Armed Infantry: 100 (Regulars)

Whether or not any of the troops serving "Erac's Cousin" are humanoid is open to debate. Certainly, humanoid levies will join his forces in some strength if they are called.

General Note: These personalities will seldom take the field on one side or another, for they fear to begin a process of escalation which will draw other powerful figures into the contest opposite them, thus risking a final confrontation.

WANTED!

Judges for convention tournaments

This convention season, TSR Periodicals will be sponsoring tournaments at three major conventions across the country:

Origins	June 27-29	Chester, PA
GenCon XIII	August 21-24	Kenosha, WI
PacifiCon	August 29-September 1	San Mateo, CA

TSR Periodicals will be sponsoring Tournaments of:

The Awful Green Things from Outer Space (TSR)
Ironclads (Yaquinto)
Giant Circus Maximus (Heritage)
Star Fire (Task Force)

If you are planning to attend one or more of these conventions and would like to help judge one of these tournaments for TSR Periodicals, contact: TOURNEY, c/o TSR Periodicals, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. List your name, address, phone number, the convention(s) you will be attending, and which event you'd be interested in judging. TSR Periodicals will arrange for free admission for all judges for the days they judge.



Combat in the compromise game

F. C. MacKnight

In developing a game which compromises between LAHKMAR (the originally conceived game) and LANKHMAR (the commercial product made by TSR Hobbies, Inc.), one aspect which leaves much room for elaboration is the mechanics of combat and the development of tables to determine the outcome of that combat.

To avoid (or cause?) more confusion, I shall hereafter refer to the compromise game as LAKMAR, a hybrid name. LAKMAR will use the moves and other rules given for LAHKMAR in the article in TD-33 (January 1980), but the compromise game involves a more detailed system of alternatives for what takes place during combat, and it assigns the first throw of the dice to the attacker, that is, the player who initiates the combat.

Let us first examine a simple encounter of swordsman against swordsman, neither of them heroes and presumably both of equal skill. Should there be any advantage in initiating the engagement?

In a fencing bout, the attacker may have a temporary advantage as long as he is in the attack, but this doesn't hold here. The initiator of the engagement may approach his adversary but the latter may be the one who first attacks, so that the one who initiates the engagement by moving into proximity is only the "attacker" by the definition of his intentions, and should derive no odds advantage for such a role.

Referring to the contestants as A and B, we can list the following possible outcomes of an exchange of blows:

- A wins, B perishes
- B wins, A perishes
- A kills B but A is wounded
- B kills A but B is wounded
- A wounds B
- B wounds A
- A and B wound each other

No decision; neither is wounded, and the combat continues.

Of those eight possible outcomes, two can be discarded as impractical. If one contestant wounds the other without himself being wounded, it may be presumed that the wounded warrior would soon succumb to a second blow. So, eliminating the fifth and sixth items on the list above, we have six possible events:

- 1 = A kills B
- 2 = A kills B but A is wounded
- 3 = A and B are both wounded
- 4 = No decision
- 5 = B kills A but B is wounded
- 6 = B kills A

This "table" lists the outcomes in progressive order from the most beneficial result for A to the most beneficial result for B, though the relative positions of the third and fourth items are uncertain.

To adapt such a table for hero vs. warrior combat, one should attach a higher probability to the hero (A) killing the warrior—perhaps by subtracting two from the roll of a six-sided die to determine the outcome. In so doing, "A kills B" will be the recorded result on a roll of 1, 2 or 3. However, perhaps there should be a chance for a warrior to kill or wound a hero—no matter how slight a chance that may be (say, 1 in 20). To incorporate that element of chance, there would need to be a way to generate a wider range of random numbers—most easily done by using a different type of die (d8, d12 or d20).

could require a special table. Possibilities here can be most complex. How about a desert-edge combat with Fafhrd on camel with ax against a horseman with sword aided by a warrior on foot with spear?

Other types of combat encounters must also be planned for. Things are not always evenly matched, as is the case with two similar swordsmen. In many cases, the initiator is actually attacking, and should get some benefit because of this. An onrushing spearman might be such an example, and certainly a horseman with spear or upraised sword qualifies for this advantage. An approaching ax-wielder would probably be rushing in, with his ax in a position to cleave his enemy at the first blow, and a swordsman adversary must decide whether to try to parry the blow with his weaker sword, or to try to avoid it by stepping back or dodging, then pressing to thrust before the ax-man can resume attack or take a defensive posture.

In short, there will be cases when the probabilities ought to be "loaded" slightly in the favor of one of the contestants, perhaps heavily when one combatant is mounted and has a longer-reaching weapon, and perhaps very heavily, when one combatant is a hero—and still allow the weaker party to have at least a slight chance of success. This is where the more sophisticated polyhedral dice come in.

Simply put, the procedure for developing a combat table for any given set of circumstances is as follows: Determine the entire range of possible outcomes. Attach relative probabilities to each single possible outcome (i.e. one outcome may be twice as likely to occur as another, and that should be reflected). Then, determine which polyhedral die gives enough variation in numbers to allow for all possible outcomes, and attach each outcome to a certain number (or numbers) which, when rolled on the die or dice, will cause that outcome to occur.

* * *

Returning to LAKMAR, what have we that needs these multiple possibilities in varying degrees of probability? These types of tables are to be considered:

- Attack at a distance (thrown or propelled weapons);
- Hand to hand combat, Attack and Reprise;
- Wounding tables.

Attack at a distance

Weapons under consideration are the spear, arrow, stone (from Mouser's sling) and ax thrown by Fafhrd and the Northern Mercenaries. There will be tables for two-space throws or "shots", three spaces, and four spaces with decreasing probability of success as the distance increases; and possibly additional tables for heroes especially adept at either propelling the weapon or avoiding it. It must be considered whether "shooting" from horse-, camel-back, or shipboard would have the same accuracy as from solid ground, and also a factor is the effect of forest trees and shrubbery on missile accuracy.

Combat at adjacent spaces

Here we have Warrior against Warrior, Hero against Hero (possibly the same table would do, but maybe not), and Warrior against Hero. There would be tables for swordsman against swordsman, swordsman against spearman, swordsman against ax-wielder, spearman against spearman, spearman against ax-man, and ax-man against ax-man. Also, contestant on foot vs. one mounted on horse or camel, with the same permutation of weapons. Horseman vs. horseman and camel rider vs. camel rider, likewise. It is unlikely but possible that there could be a combat between a camel rider and a horseman at the desert edge! And combat at sea (adjacent boats) could involve a different set of possibilities.

In each of these combats, there is the problem of whether the instigator of the engagement may be considered as having an advantage. If so, there should also be a Reprise table for continuing combat with no attacking advantage. When there is no attacking advantage, there is no need of a special Reprise table. In combat between diverse weapons, the attack may give advantage to one weapon and the continuation to the other.

Then there is the problem of two men against one. Usually the two would win a complete victory, but a hero against two warriors

Wounding tables

LAKMAR should also pay more attention to the nature and effect of wounds. In LAHKMAR and LANKHMAR all wounds have the same effect, but a throw could determine just what and where the wound may be, and how it affects the recipient's further activity. He might be able to handle a bow but not travel (leg or hip wound), or he might be unable to fight but could travel (arm wound). He may or may not be able to handle his mount or the boat in his charge. Severity of wound is a factor: He may be able to continue fighting at a lower degree of effectiveness.

The Heroes in combat

Each hero has a terrain in which he has an advantage, either by being able to move where others cannot or being able to move more swiftly there. Fafhrd can cross mountains, Mouser can swim as rapidly as a boat, Pulgh moves faster than others in swamp, Movarl likewise in the forest.

How about combat? Here too each hero has a specialty that must be taken into consideration. Originally the favorite weapon was the ax for Fafhrd, the sling for Mouser, the spear for Pulgh and the sword for Movarl. This is complicated by Leiber's near deification of the swordsmanship of Fafhrd and the Mouser in their printed saga to the extent that Fischer's original specialties were neglected.

To maintain equality of forces it would seem that we should either raise Pulgh and Movarl to the same level of fighting power as Fafhrd and the Mouser, or strengthen the terrain advantage or warrior power of Lankhmar and Kvarch Nar with respect to the Mingols and the City of the East. I think that this latter has been done to some extent with respect to the terrain. Lankhmar has the advantage of the Sinking Land and the salt marsh; Kvarch Nar has the forest which slows down the movement of adverse forces. The other Citadels are more easily available to attack. So, a bit of combat favoritism for Fafhrd and the Mouser is not out of line.

Ax: Fafhrd is the only hero proficient in the use of the war ax; except for him, only the northern mercenaries use it. Fafhrd, as a hero, should have a higher proficiency than the other northerners. The ax can also be thrown, with far less accuracy than the spear but a greater likelihood of a severe wound if it hits. Fafhrd may be allowed some possibility of a hit at three spaces (as well as 2, the range of the other Vikings), and since he carries a sword he is more likely to use the ax as a throwing weapon. (Remember that the ax remains where it lands, either in the adversary or on his space if there is a miss. This leaves the mercenaries weaponless, so they must be way of throwing their axes away.) If anyone besides Fafhrd and the northerners uses or throws an ax, their success should be rated very low.

The spear, Pulgh's specialty: He must be rated higher than Fafhrd, Mouser and the common warriors both in distance and accuracy. But since Fafhrd is now well-known as a strong spearman, I suggest that both Fafhrd and Pulgh be allowed 4 spaces for possible spear throws, but Pulgh be given greater accuracy.

Missiles: No hero is particularly good with the bow, and if they use one, the success should be only that of a warrior. But Mouser has his sling, which rates somewhat higher than the bow in putting opponents permanently out of combat. It does seem a bit too much to allow the sling to be more accurate than the bow, but the skull-crushing possibility may give the Mouser better effect at each distance (2, 3, and 4 spaces).

Sword: Can we allow Fafhrd and Mouser to dominate swordplay as they do in Leiber's saga? Or must we use sword proficiency as a means of equalizing any superiority Fafhrd has in spear and ax? Pulgh is already behind Fafhrd in power, since the two are nearly equal in spear but Fafhrd has his ax too. Mouser's effectiveness with the sling is difficult to equate, but it seems that he may be behind both in non-swords. And so far, Movarl has no special powers except being able to call animals, which seems insufficiently compensatory.

The sword was originally Movarl's strong point. Should we make him superior to Fafhrd and the Mouser in this category? "No way!" says Harry, who, if chance enters the game, wants Fafhrd and Mouser to be preeminent in swordplay, too. My suggestion is that all heroes be given strong probability sword preference against warriors, but Pulgh slightly less in hero-vs.-hero combat. I suggest that

Movarl's ability with the sword be given in his relation to warriors. Let us make Movarl ambidextrous, able to handle a sword in each hand simultaneously and thus able to successfully fight two warriors simultaneously, which however would not help him greatly against another hero.

Heroes in Defense

It has already been pointed out above and in part 5 of this series (TD-36) that the hero gets preferential treatment in hand-to-hand combat with warriors and is allowed a bit less vulnerability in missile attack with spear or ax because of presumed greater quickness in reaction time. The hero can occasionally dodge, avoid or fend off the slower-moving missiles that would reach an ordinary warrior, and the Mouser gets a greater speed allowance than the others because he is a smaller target as well.

How about arrows? This is a general problem for heroes and warriors alike. What garb do we imagine the Nehwonian military to wear? Do they have a costume that offers any protection against arrows? Do they wear any metal or heavy leather that could change what would be a fatal shot into a mere wound? The probability table for LAKMAR must describe just how devastating the arrow attack should be; what proportion of wounds and fatalities there are to misses or non-registering hits.

The Leiberian saga is imprecise about all this, often allowing the reader to use his own imagination for precise details. Certainly the Lankhmarians had gone past the stage of using shields defensively, because they used lighter swords that permitted "fencing." Parrying with the sword was in vogue, with the occasional use of the dagger in the left (non-sword) hand or cloak on the left arm. In this out-of-town situation with bowmen aiming at you, some additional protection would be natural. The use of a buckler would be sensible and would enable the fast-moving Mouser to often parry an arrow. So it would not be amiss for there to be an adjustment to the arrow tables when Mouser is the target.

* * *

In review, then, it would seem that the number of probability tables, including special adjustments, might be nearly astronomical, restricting the game of LAKMAR to diehard probability gamesters. And their victims! The probability freak could act as referee for a good contest between players who need not worry about such matters. The function and advisability of a *Referee* (a term obviously related etymologically to *Banshee*) has been promoted in Part 5 of this series, and I think that this last section (6) demonstrates that the need for one in LAKMAR is almost as great as that for a Dungeon Master in *Dungeons & Dragons*!

SUMMARY

This series of articles was originally intended merely to describe the origin of the game (part 1) and how to modify the TSR board and rules to play the original game as conceived by Harry Fischer and Fritz Leiber (parts 2, 3, 4). This resurrection of the original game I designated as LAHKMAR (Fischer's spelling); Leiber's spelling, LANKHMAR, I reserved for the new TSR game, its board and the Citadel from which it was named. Having accomplished that task, I then became fascinated with the idea of adopting the chance or probability-outcome of combat, as used in TSR's LANKHMAR and most current war games, to the longer, slower-moving LAHKMAR, along with elaborations and what I regarded as improvements on the combat tables. That project has occupied the last two sections of the series.

(Editor's note: The next, and last, article in Prof. MacKnight's series about LANKHMAR and its creators will be a special postscript. Fritz Leiber and Harry Fischer, writers of the Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser books and the creators and developers of Lankhmar, created a puzzle for MacKnight to solve when the three men were cohorts more than 40 years ago. "Fafhrd and Mouser in the Dungeon" is the name of the game. It, and its solution, will appear in TD-38.)

Urban encounters

(From page 8)

Night: Roll every 15-20 minutes.

00-38 Encounter
39-59 Nightwatch
60-99 Nothing

Treasure Table

	copper	silver	electrum	gold	platinum	gems	jewelry	magic
C1	1-4	50%:1						
C2	2-12	1-4	60%: 1-2					
C3	4-24	3-18	1-6	50%: 1-2				
C4		5-30	2-12	1-10	1-3			
C5		6-36	4-24	3-18	1-8	1-3		
C6			6-36	5-30	3-18	1-6	1-3	10%
C7			1-600	1-400	6-36	2-12	1-6	20%
C8			3-1800	2-1200	1-800	3-18	2-12	40%

Additional rolls may be made on the Type of Person Encountered Table as desired. On the Type of Encounter Table, it must be noted that many encounters are things seen, not things actually happening to the players. A Chase, Fight, or Discovered Ambush need not directly involve the players (although they might): These are often merely things observed that might draw in the players.

It is important to note that the level of a non-player-character represents the skill with which the person performs his or her jobs, not the person's rank. A 12th-level noble might be a lowly baronet—but a good one. Since skill is (supposedly) rewarded, there should be a *loose* correlation between Level and Rank—a 10th-level merchant has a better chance of being the master of the shopkeeper's guild than does a 4th-level merchant—but this relation is not precise.

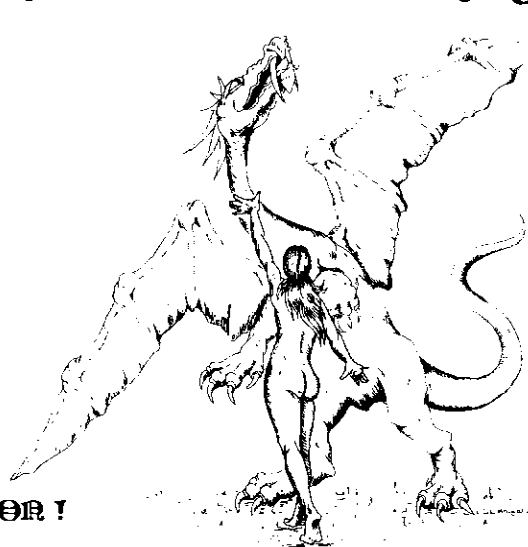
Examples: Three encounters are rolled, none of which involve the watch. First Encounter: On the Type of Person Encountered Table, a 16 is rolled: a Scud. This lowlife ruffian is of the 2nd level (roll on the Level of the Encounter Table: 52—too high; scuds may only advance to the 3rd level. Roll again: 93—too high. Once more: 24: the scud is of the 2nd level, and has two four-sided hit dice). On the Type of Encounter Table a 68: Overhear Plot is rolled. This may be handled in many ways. Perhaps the scud hears someone plotting revenge and asks to be let in, and the players hear this. Perhaps the scud is receiving instructions from his master on when to waylay a merchant, and it is the players who overhear.

Example Two: On the Type of Person Encountered Table, a 28: Magic User is rolled. On the Level of the Encounter Table a 68 comes up; the magician is of the 7th level. The Type of Encounter is 88: Mugging. Possibly the mugger is unaware that he's trying to alleybash a magician; if so, he's in for a well deserved surprise. Or (less likely), possibly the magician is out to make a few *groschen* by Sleeping a passerby or two, to take their coins.

Third Example: On the Type of Person Encountered, a 10: Tradesman. On the Level of the Encounter a 93 (too high), 97 (too high), 27 indicates that the tradesman is of the 2nd level, with two three-sided hit dice. The Type of the Encounter is a 08: Pickpocket. Since this almost always involves a thief, this could mean many things. A: Maybe the thief is pickpocketing the tradesman, and the players see. B: Maybe the thief is pickpocketing the players, and the tradesman sees. C: Maybe the thief and the tradesman are acting as a team, pickpocketing either the players or someone else entirely, while the players either see or don't see.

These tables put the raw data into your hands in a random fashion. The detailed structure is up to the referee. Imagination and the skill of adlibbing are essential—just as they are in all facets of D&D. Once I rolled 00—referee's choice—three times consecutively on the Type of Encounter Chart (I only later found out that Chet's programmable calculator was misprogrammed). I stated that the first was a three-alarm

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funeral, with the masses whooping and wailing for a departed minor official. The second was a pack of wild dogs leaving the sewers to avoid a wizard's Cloudkill. The third, a diamond thief with a hole in his loot-bag, dropping diamonds to the delight of the crowded streetful of peasants.

My players never dreamed that I was making it up as I went along, and assumed it was a pre-plotted series of adventures.

Type of Person Encountered Table

		Type of		Max.	
Freq.	No. App.	H.D.	Lair Treas.	Align.	Char. Level
00-01	Noble	R	1-3	4	95 C8 — +5 12
02	Farmer	v	1-2	2	0 C1 LN — 2
03-06	Merchant	C	1-6	3	40 C4-C7 N — 12
07-09	StreetSeller	C	1	3	0 C3-C4 N — 5
10-11	Tradesman	C	1-4	3	60 C5 N — 8
12-13	Specialist	C	1-4	3	60 C5 N — 8
14-15	StreetUrchin	U	1-10	2	0 — N -1 5
16-18	Scud	C	1-12	4	40 C2 CN -1 3
19-20	Beggar	U	1	2	100 C1 N -4 8
21-25	Fighter	C	—	—	— — — —
26-30	MagicUser	C	—	—	— — — —
31-35	Cleric	C	—	—	— — — —
36-40	Thief	C	—	—	— — — —
41-43	Druid	U	—	—	— — — —
44-48	Monk	C	—	—	— — — —
49-53	Illusionist	C	—	—	— — — —
54-58	Paladin	C	—	—	— — — —
59-61	Ranger	U	—	—	— — — —
62-66	Assassin	C	—	—	— — — —
67-69	Bandit	U	—	—	— — — —
70-72	Brigand	U	—	—	— — — —
73-75	Pilgrim	U	—	—	— — — —
76	Psionic Character: Roll Again				
77-79	Bard	U	—	—	— — — —
80-82	Hooker	U	1-3	3	40 C2-C5 N +2 10
83-85	Bully	U	1	5	50 C3 NE -1 6
86-87	Panderer	U	1	3	30 C4 N +1 7
88-89	Dealer	U	1	3	30 C5 CE -1 8
90-91	TownCrier	R	1	3	0 C2 LN +2 4
92	"Untouchable"	V	1	2	0 — N -7 2
93-95	Porter	U	1-6	3	30 C2 N +1 3
96	Messenger	R	1	3	10 C1 N — 3
97	StreetPerformer	R	1-3	3	0 C1-C2 N +4 8
98	Madman	V	1	2	0 — N -3 2
99	Monster	V	—	—	— — — —

Explanations

Frequency: V = Very Rare, R = Rare, U = Uncommon, C = Common.

Type of hit dice: This-many-sided-dice for each level, e.g., a 4th level Hooker would have 4-12 hit points.

Treasures: C1-C8 are explained on the Treasure Table.

Alignment: N = Neutral, LN = Lawful Neutral, CN = Chaotic Neutral, NE = Neutral Evil, CE = Chaotic Evil. (Most of the city lowlife care only for themselves).

Charisma: This is the effect of the occupation upon the charisma of the non-player-character, only with respect to other non-player-characters; the players, as always, may make up their own minds.

Level of the Encounter Table

00 - 22 = Level 1	71 - 76 = Level 8
23 - 31 = Level 2	77 - 82 = Level 9
32 - 40 = Level 3	83 - 88 = Level 10
41 - 48 = Level 4	89 - 92 = Level 11
49 - 56 = Level 5	93 - 95 = Level 12
57 - 63 = Level 6	96 - 99 = Level 13 or higher
64-70 = Level 7	

Type of Encounter Table

00 = Referee's Choice	60-66 = Catch Thief (35%) has loot)
99 = Assassination attempt, player	58-59 = Find Corpse
98 = Kidnap attempt, player	55-57 = Find Body (Alive)
95-97 = Mugging "	52-54 = Illegal Business offer
95-96 = Major Riot	42-51 = Fight
93-94 = Assassination attempt, other	37-41 = Chase
90-92 = Kidnap attempt, other	32-36 = Hooker
84-89 = Mugging "	29-31 = Drug Deal, player
77-83 = Discover Ambush	26-28 = Drug Deal, other
72-75 = False Accusation, player	23-25 = Minor Riot
67-71 = Overhear a plot	20-22 = Business offer
	14-19 = Insult
	01-13 = Pickpocket

Cities can help. . .

(From page 9)

when he could become guildmaster himself, a vicious war may result. The ensuing violent intrigue is something which no gamer should miss, and it makes the character's and DM's lives all the more interesting.

The best possibilities for a beginning fighter lie in hiring himself out as a merchant's caravan guard or other mercenary warrior, for, unfortunately, little is to be had by the independent warrior in the city, and unless he teams up with other characters (such as thieves who want muscle), he will soon find himself going broke and joining the army, if there is one.

Last, but not least, are magic-users and clerics. I deal with them jointly because they alone share the ability to cast spells at low levels. As with thieves and assassins, the best chance these types have lies in using their powers in unsavory ways, so evil characters generally fare best in the city.

Of course, to achieve a good urban adventure, one must be willing to put forth the necessary effort. It falls to the DM to come up with interesting, original ideas and properly apply them to his design. Sure, it's a lot of work, but the age-old axiom applies to D&D so well: You only get out of it what you put into it.

If the DM is having trouble designing a town, or if he wants to make a substantial addition to his campaign's urban environment, he should by all means get the Judges Guild's *City State of the Invincible Overlord*. The *City State* is a truly admirable achievement. Giving away any specifics about it would be a crime of the worst kind, but let it suffice to say that this product is excellent for its sheer enormity and diversity. A character could spend years exploring the city itself, let alone the mines, graveyards, and forests that surround it and the dungeons beneath it, and if a PC is bored for a minute it is only because he lacks curiosity. Perhaps the best part is that most of the accompanying guidelines can be applied to other D&D towns. However, I strongly suggest that the DM should not let the presence of the *City State* dissuade him from the rewarding effort of designing his own city.

Drive is just as important for PCs, but in their cases it should be in the form of ambition, for it is the character who tries to get ahead (perhaps by assassinating the Guildmaster) who makes the game interesting, not the one who is content to be a nobody.

Eloquence and tact become essential, because without friends (preferably in high places), a character will not get far. The importance of having someone you can count on for help in a crisis cannot be overstressed. Players must also make an effort to control the violent reflexes they have developed in wilderness or dungeons. Believe it or not, I have seen good characters ruin their chances of success by being too free with their blades. Unless the city in which your campaign is located is a political anarchy without law enforcement, you can't go down the street slashing right and left.

This song of the praises of urban D&D is not so bold as to imply that this type of adventuring should occupy an unduly large part of a D&D's playing time. On the contrary, too much town is bad for anyone, and a careful balance among wilderness, city and dungeon is the only way to ensure that a character's career will be filled with exciting challenges.

Neutral dragons

(From page 7)

minors each; Emerald, 2 minors and 1 major; Sapphire, 3 minors and 1 major; Amethyst, 3 minors and 2 majors; Sardior the Ruby Dragon has 4 minor and 3 major disciplines, as follows—Domination, ESP, Invisibility, Levitation, Molecular Rearrangement, Energy Control, Dimension Walk. All Neutral dragons consider their level of mastery for all disciplines to be equivalent to twice their age level.

CRYSTAL DRAGONS

Crystal dragons live on mountain crags, far away from all other creatures. They like to come out at night and lie under the stars. Crystal dragons can breathe a *Dazzling Cloud* twice per day, 4" long by 4" wide by 2" high, that causes temporary blindness for everyone enveloped in it. After emerging from the cloud, creatures remain blinded for 10-60 rounds (saving throw cuts in half). The *Dazzling Cloud* is as bright as daylight, and can be seen for miles. All creatures within 60' of it will strike at -2 to hit, due to its brightness (except for fire elementals, etc.). Basically nocturnal creatures such as goblins, et al, will strike at -4.

Crystal dragons are a milky white in color, but when the moon or stars shine on them, their hide becomes luminescent and sparkling. In bright sunlight, they are almost unbearable to look at, because of the dazzling brilliance that their hide reflects.

TOPAZ DRAGONS

Topaz dragons prefer to dwell along bleak, rocky seacoasts, although they have no inordinate love for the water as Bronze dragons do. Twice per day they can use their breath to *Dehydrate* objects. Their breath dries up 3 cu. ft. per h.p. of dragon when directed against liquids. Other materials suspended in the liquid (e.g. salt) will precipitate out.

When directed against living creatures the breath will cause every creature in its path (3" long cone with 1" base) to lose 7-12 Strength points due to dehydration. After being dehydrated by a Topaz dragon, a creature must be nursed back to health carefully. Affected creatures will regain ½ Strength point per day with adequate nursing care and rest. A successful saving throw reduces damage to 1-6 strength points drained. Characters with a constitution over 15 may recover 1 full strength point per day after 6 days. Curative spells will not affect dehydration.

Any creature reduced to less than 3 Strength will lapse into a coma, and will die in 3-12 turns unless a *Strength* spell or a *Raise Dead* spell is cast on him. These will not cure the individual of his dehydration, however, nor help him recover his strength, but will only let him pass into normal sleep for 4-24 turns. Any creature reduced to 0 Strength points is killed instantly.

Topaz dragons are a light orange color.

EMERALD DRAGONS

Emerald dragons make their homes in extinct or dormant volcanoes. Twice per day they can use a keening sort of voice (breath) weapon which will set up a *sonic vibration*, knocking all affected creatures within hearing distance unconscious for 10-60 rounds. Those making their saving throw vs. dragon breath are deafened for 10-60 rounds.

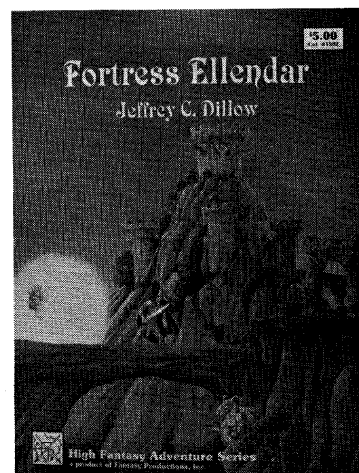
Emerald dragons are beautiful creatures whose scaly hide seems to be in constant motion due to the many shades of green on the body. The interplay of the various shades can be very distracting to an observer, and the Emerald dragon knows how to undulate its body to create a hypnotic effect on those he is parlaying with. Thus, after 3 rounds of peaceable encounter with this sort of dragon, the dragon is able to attack (if it wishes to) with complete surprise.

SAPPHIRE DRAGONS

Sapphire dragons make their lairs in deep underground caverns, avoiding inhabited places where orcs, dwarves, etc., live. Twice per day the Sapphire dragon can set up a *sonic vibration* by its keening wail, which *disintegrates* a number of hit points equal to the number of hit points the dragon has. Creatures not killed outright by loss of hit points would survive, but with weapons, armor and clothing totally disintegrated. Magical items would get a saving throw.

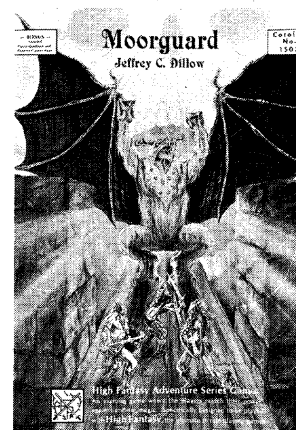
Sapphire dragons are sometimes mistaken for young blue dragons, although the thinking adventurer will sometimes realize his

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mistake when he considers that blue dragons prefer arid climes, and Sapphire dragons are likely to be found in caverns in any clime.

AMETHYST DRAGONS

Amethyst dragons love to dwell near isolated highland tarns. Twice per day, the Amethyst dragon can shriek, with the same effects as a banshee.

Amethyst dragons are a sparkling lavender in color.

SARDIOR, THE RUBY DRAGON

Finally, we come to the Ruby Dragon. This is not a breed of dragon, but a unique individual. Sardior the Ruby Dragon is the Prince of Neutral Dragons. He dwells in a magical castle that roams the night sky, high up in the atmosphere. He keeps his castle moving so that it is always in earth's shadow. Often, when Sardior's castle is sighted, sages think they are seeing a reddish star making unusual conjunctions with other stars in the night sky.

Sardior keeps a court of 5 thanes, one each of the various breeds of neutral dragons. Their names are: *Hrodel* (a female Crystal dragon), psionic disciplines of Empathy and Invisibility; *Tithonmas* (male Topaz dragon), disciplines of Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, and Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions; *Smargad* (male Emerald dragon), disciplines of Domination, Hypnosis, and Teleportation; *Charisma* (female Sapphire dragon), disciplines of Cell Adjustment, ESP, Suspend Animation, and Etherealness; and *Aleithilithos* (male Amethyst dragon), disciplines of Detection of Good/Evil, Detection of Magic, Object Reading, Energy Control, and Dimension Walk.

Occasionally (10%), one of these dragons will roam the earth without Sardior and the other thanes. If encountered, the thane may reward beings that find favor with it, usually in the form of gems, but sometimes in the granting of a boon.

All of Sardior's thanes are huge, ancient dragons. It must be remembered, of course, that Sardior and company are a stay-at-home lot, not given much to interfering with others' businesses. All the Neutral dragons honor Sardior, but being what they are, his sovereignty does not much affect their daily lives of treasure-mongering. All are agreed, however, that Sardior is the most brilliant conversationalist and raconteur of all dragons.

Sardior has two breath weapons which he can employ twice per day each: a shriek (like an Amethyst dragon) or a dazzling cloud (like a Crystal dragon). He has a ruddy appearance, but his handsome features and general grace ensure that only a very inexperienced dragon-hunter would mistake him for a red dragon.

So much for Neutral dragons. Put one of these in your campaign, and listen to the music of agonizing wails when your hardened dragon-slayers encounter something that they've never heard of before. (Chortle, chortle!) After all, keeping them on their toes is what makes for exciting play. May your Paladins go to bed tonight with clear consciences.

enough to crisp flesh, but Farmer also has one that shoots burning oil at anyone standing in front of it when it is first activated (thus, anyone in the know would stand to the side, toss a stone through the gate, and wait for the fireworks to die down). Another underhanded trick, ideal for scattering parties, is a second, delayed gate set off by passing through the first (so as to catch the third or fourth person in the marching order).

The most spectacular trap is a circuit or series of gates, each activated by the preceding one, so that people entering any gate in the circuit are trapped, blinking in rapid succession from one location to another. They are vulnerable to attacks in the few seconds they are in each location (usually by missiles), and can leave the circuit only by leaping out of a gate during that very brief time. If they misjudge the timing, they are bisected or otherwise mangled as part of them is gated on to the next location. A base chance of leaping out successfully of 60% is suggested, plus 5% for every point of Dexterity over 15, and minus 5% for every point under 12. For every 10 HP that the character may have currently lost (i.e. wounds), also subtract 5% from the chance of success. If a character is caught by the gate shift, he or she must save vs. paralyzation or be cut in half (instant death). If the save is made, the gate is considered to have severed a limb or something of the sort, and such a wound will have to be cauterized to prevent the character from bleeding to death. The character will take 2d12 damage and must save vs. System Shock, or die. If the trapped person has a friend at one of the locations visited by the circuit, the friend can stop the circuit by jamming the empty gate so full of matter that the maximum mass it can shift is reached and it stops working, shutting down the circuit. Of course, the trapped person will be freed elsewhere in the circuit, which may be several planes away.

An artifact, The Horn of Shambarinen, has the power of opening gates between planes whenever its seven notes are sounded in the proper sequence at a resonant point in any plane (the DM must determine which plane the resonant point is adjacent to, and thus where the gate will lead). It can also match the resonance of any existing gate and operate it (without the usual key, device, or missing crescent). Gates glow if the Horn is played close to them (say, within 60') and the horn-blower can see through the gate into wherever it leads. The Horn resembles a silver *Horn of Valhalla*, with seven buttons set in a line along its top, and the mouth of the horn filled with a silvery web. It is constructed of an unknown and seemingly indestructible metal, and bears the hieroglyph of Shambarinen on its underside.

A more recent series of books, C.J. Cheryh's Morgaine trilogy,⁷ illustrates the attitude of medieval-level cultures to gates in their midst. An early and excellent use of gates is found in C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*,⁸ which incorporates a fascinating campaign setting: The Wood Between The Worlds. This is an ancient woods into which almost all gates open, and as a result is peopled with many strange and wonderful creatures. A tavern in such a place would abound with fascinating and powerful NPCs. And that painting over the bar, if one stares at it for a moment, can be stepped through, into . . . Well, have fun.

Notes

1. Michael Moorcock, *The Vanishing Tower*, p. 152 (DAW paperback).
2. See Schmitz's *The Lion Game*—a DAW paperback—for a huge dungeon of rooms connected by portals, with many traps and 'lost' sections.
3. Op. Cit., p. 159.
4. Michael Moorcock, *The Sailor On The Seas Of Fate*, p. 58 (DAW paperback).
5. The books, available in Ace paperbacks, are (in chronological order): *The Maker Of Universes*; *The Gates of Creation*; *A Private Cosmos*; *Behind The Walls Of Terra*; and *The Lavalite World*. Essential references, all.
6. One such 'killer gate' was a doorframe revolving rapidly in midair. Identification of the 'safe side' was of course very difficult. Another might be a doorframe, only the upper half of which is a gate, so that anyone stepping through the gate in a normal manner (rather than leaping) will be cut in half as only their upper body gates away.
7. *Gate of Ivrel*; *Well of Shiuan*; *Fires of Azeroth* (DAW paperbacks).
8. In chronological order: *The Magician's Nephew*; *The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe*; *Prince Caspian*; *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*; *The Silver Chair*; *The Horse and His Boy*; and *The Last Battle*, available in Puffin paperbacks in Canada and Macmillan paperbacks in the States. The first five bristle with material of interest to D&D players. The Wood Between The Worlds appears in Chapter 3 of *The Magician's Nephew*.

In one small step

(From page 5)

given gate leads to. Gates may be set for one-time operation, random resonance changes, or activation only by code words. They may also "flipflop"; that is, automatically change their resonance after being activated, so that the next time the gate is used it will lead somewhere else.

Gates may also be traps (and in Farmer's books, usually are). They may be set to kill those trying to use them or entering them in the wrong direction or manner,⁶ or lead to "inescapable" prison cells (see Mark S. Day's article in *TD -23* or Farmer's novels), undesirable planes, or to almost certain death (i.e. into midair, a mile from the ground). The hero of the series, Kickaha the Trickster (who'd make a great GITE—Lawrence Schick and Tom Moldvay please note!), escaped from one such cell by crouching atop an empty food platter and being gated to the kitchen. (Gates are often—especially in cells—used as dumbwaiters, with a matching pair of gates in the kitchen and set into the top of the dining table.)

The usual way in which gates kill is an electrical discharge powerful

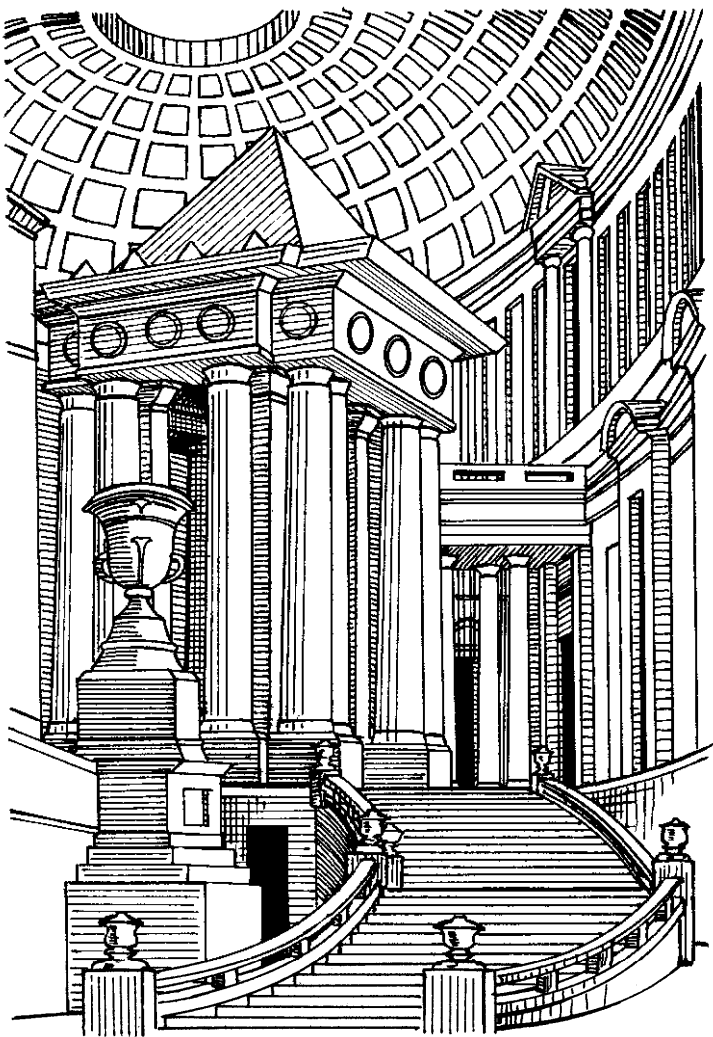
The History of Elfland

(From page 13)

by doing undignified work that Elves spurned. Laws forbidding their marriage to pureblood Elves perpetuated their kind and kept the problem of their existence alive.

Elven history is now given over to local matters for several generations. They sealed the borders of their kingdom and slew all trespassers who violated their seclusion. What interest Neuth had in foreign places was restricted to the sacred pilgrimages to the sea.

When the next invasion came, it was not the work of barbarian peoples. In the latter ninth century, prosperity led the Miviorians to



Etching of an interior view in the Great Temple of the sun god, Oenglamh

crave expansion of their realm into the lands north of Serpent Bay. They established a base that they called Addat and laid claim to the surrounding area, vanquishing the thin population of barbarians and Trolls. Elfland watched the invasion with horror.

Every Elf hoped to someday make a pilgrimage to the sea. Now, suddenly, foreigners were turning their processions back from the coast or exacting tribute for passage. Vengefully, the Elves rallied for their first war outside their own borders.

Unfortunately, Elven tactics derived from fighting the primitive Sion Hac almost two centuries before. The modern armies of Mivior broke up their outdated formations and took thousands of prisoners. The Elves scrambled back to their borders, frantically studying their options. At last an embassy (made up of drafted Ercii) arrived in Addat to negotiate rights to passage to the sea. The Miviorians condescended to allow pilgrims transit in exchange for a nominal

tax. They were looking ahead to the trading possibilities these pilgrims might provide when they arrived hungry and tired from the north.

The reigning High Prince, Ffaraon, could not endure the shame of Elfland's defeat and abdicated. Elir, an Elf who had been training for the priesthood of Oenglamh, accepted the throne in his place.

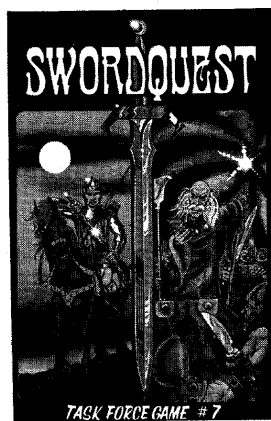
Elir, true to his background, initiated a program of religious revival to offset the despair of the defeat. His mass meeting drew hundreds of thousands of Elves together in fervent prayer. Elir's priests invoked the power of heaven against the offending Miviorians. In the ensuing hysteria, the part-human Ercii were subjected to another cycle of persecution. One group of them, hated more than most for their adept use of magic, gave up life in Elfland and fled to foreign parts. Finding scant hospitality wherever they ventured, they and their descendants took up a nomadic way of life and became known as the Wandering People.

Elir's prayers seemed to be answered when, on his deathbed, his excited couriers brought him word that a miracle had taken place in the lands of Men. Dreadful monsters like none ever seen upon Minaria were slaying humans by the thousands and turning their cities into tombs. It was, of course, a report of the coming of "the abominations of the land and the horrors of the air."

"It is the avenging hand of the gods!" declared Elir, who died joyful.

But the monsters failed to destroy mankind, and they had all but vanished by the end of the tenth century. Men were again fast becoming a threat to Elfland, but all Elir's successors could do was pray.

The next prince, Huardar, was a supremely practical Elf. He abandoned Elir's policy of divine intervention and appraised the situation coldly. A hundred years had passed since the Miviorian War, and the Elves had done little to update their military. Huardar began to recruit human tacticians through the cooperation of Ercii traders. Since the Miviorian War, Ercii had begun to work in the



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undignified business of trade, sometimes going to human cities to live. At this time, the Muetarians were conquering the cities of Kalruna-Sasir and many defeated officers had gone into exile. Approached by Ercii agents, many of them consented to take service with the prince of Elfland.

The trainers received an adequate, if reserved, welcome and were placed in charge of the Elven training camps. Even the lowest-caste Elf chafed at being subject to Men, but they yielded to the wisdom of the high prince and endured the indignity stoically.

Within a few years, Huardar was ready to try out his new army by making incursions into the barbarian borderlands. The Elves' training, plus their native forest sense, garnered them numerous victories against tribesmen. Subsequent princes continued the policy of adventure and placed a number of Conodras tribes to the east of Elfland under tribute.

Foreign contacts slowly expanded. The government allowed a limited trade, which was carried out by Ercii. The restrictions on profit within Elfland did not apply to trade with humans, so many cunning Ercii traders grew rich. With their capital issuing from trade, Ercii established the new, unregulated businesses of banking and money-lending. For the first time, Ercii individuals had the power to influence the prince's officials—albeit by bribing the venal elements among them. Pure Elves, forced by ponderous regulations to hoe a too-small farm or labor over a profitless workbench, resented Ercii prosperity, and violent assaults on the Ercii multiplied.

In the early twelfth century, Dwarven colonizers arrived from the east with the intention of mining the gold veins their agents had discovered north of the Spires of the Eternal. Elir III, the reigning prince, dispatched an army to drive them out, but the Dwarves' mountaineering skills made for a prolonged campaign. Over the winter, Ider Bolis mobilized for a full-scale war. Meanwhile, the Dwarves had allied with several northern barbarian tribes. The ensuing conflict became a costly stalemate, finally ended by treaty. The Dwarves were allowed to mine their discoveries and maintain a fortress there for a period of a hundred years. In return, they guaranteed their neutrality in any Elven war and would pay a quarter of what they mined to Elfland. The city that the Dwarves built was called Aws Noir.

But no sooner was one foreign crisis resolved than another raised its head. East of Elfland, the Vidarnan dukes were engaging in military colonization on Conodras territory. Since some of these tribes were tributary to Elfland, aggression there was an affront to the Elves. However, Elir III, aged and tired, did nothing. He saw no good in intervening in a human war; moreover, his time was now taken up by complex intrigues against his royal cousins. Against their approval, he wished to pass his throne on to his daughter, Ideh. Unfortunately, although Ideh did follow him, her time on the throne was wasted in mollifying her jealous relatives. She died suddenly, a suspected victim of poison; her young sons were passed over, and all disappeared while kinsmen quarreled about the succession.

The violence that was rising among the Elves gave evidence that even the diffused influence of the outside world and the halting attempts of Neuth's princes to modernize were having a demoralizing effect on every level of Elven society.

After a generation of recriminations, assassinations and executions, the impetuous Etirun took the throne. Etirun began by rebuilding the military, which had deteriorated during the dynastic squabbles. What promised to become a successful reign was ruined by Etirun's maladroitness entrance into Immerite internal politics. He provided the catalyst for Immer's Ducal War, which aligned Elfland with the despised Vidarnan dukes.

As the war dragged on, Etirun lost prestige at home. Why, his subjects wanted to know, was Elven blood and treasure being wasted in a human civil war? Even the troops in the field grumbled as morale fell and war attritioned their numbers. Events finally released Elfland from the hated war; Etirun, pursuing Conodras raiders, was surprised in the night and captured. In exchange for release, Etirun had to cede all disputed borderland to Immer and pay a large ransom. The prince went home in disgrace and his last years were bitter and unproductive.

The new few reigns were ones of gloom and ferment in Elfland.



Stone statue of Miodmuiri, the ocean goddess, in the Plaza of the Holy

Scandals disgraced the court; a prince was exposed as having taken Dwarven bribes in exchange for extending the old peace treaty for another century; another outraged public opinion by taking Ercii concubines into the royal harem.

A formless anger and fear spread through the population. Their leaders were worthless, and foreigners repeatedly bested them in war; Ercii swaggered like princes through the towns, while Elves suffered under crushing taxes. In this feverish climate, a new "chosen race" obsession flourished as an antidote for the spreading insecurity. To escape their imprisoning castes, some Elves fled the border; others joined bandit gangs in the deep woods. Royal administrators were mobbed and beaten to death, and caste members destroyed their places of work. The kingdom tottered on the brink of dissolution.

At last the fury and resentment found itself a leader. His name was Boewenn, of the Bard caste. He told the populace their anger was right and just, and called for the downfall of the corrupt prince. "A people's prince!" became the cry as mobs gathered behind him.

When troops arrived to arrest Boewenn, his oratory seduced them and they also acclaimed him as high prince. A spontaneous march on the capital began; the government collapsed and fled for the borders before the mobs reached the gates of Ider Bolis. The feeble flight of a prince sanctioned by thirteen centuries of tradition proved how far the decay of the monarchy had gone.

Boewenn liberalized the oppressive caste system. Officials of the former regime underwent public trials; the condemned became members of convict labor gangs. Boewenn broke all contact with foreign peoples and drove their traders out of Elfland. Worse, he ordered the expulsion of the Ercii minority. Most Ercii left to establish a precarious life in alien lands, although a large colony of them settled in the wilderness north of Hothior.

Boewenn commenced a rapid expansion of the army, admitting even females if they showed strength and fierceness. He set convict gangs to excavating the site of Letho in search of ancient magic weapons. Then, to test his power, he attacked and sacked Aws Noir, taking the stored treasure and rich mines for Elfland. But all this was

only preparation for his dream—a war to destroy his human neighbors everywhere.

Fought in the early fourteenth century, Boewenn's War would take a large manuscript to describe in detail. The Elves themselves commemorate it with this "Ballad of Boewenn":

*Boewenn, Boewenn, the prince of the Elves
He gave us the right to be proud of ourselves.
His courage was huge and his honor was great
Lead us, our lord, to a glorious fate.*

*As we marched into Mivior
We met their men upon the moor.
We took their best and we threw them down
And razed the walls of Addat town.*

*Hothior, Hothior, where is your boast
That you would ruin the Elven host?
Is it in the flames of Tadafat's mound
Or in the corpses on the ground?*

*We followed the rout of Immer's famed king
Then leveled his county and rose up to sing:
'Down with inglorious and up with Boewenn;
'O give us the power to slaughter all Men!'*

After his initial victories, Boewenn was defeated. His corpse was identified among the slain in Ider Bolis after its sacking by an alliance of Boewenn's victims. A greater loss was the ancient library of Neuth. Fortunately, Elfland's conquerors were civilized and educated people; many more books were carried off as booty than were destroyed. But the action symbolized to the Elves, more than anything else could, that unless they could come to terms with the present, the past they loved would be lost as well.

The human victors selected a new high prince, Gwawl, a cousin of the old royal family before Boewenn. While the humans robbed the kingdom, Gwawl attempted to undo all of Boewenn's reforms. As the Elven population recovered from the stupor of defeat, Gwawl became the focus of national outrage. Strikes and riots spread; Gwawl, losing control of everything beyond the gates of Ider Bolis, turned to his human allies for support. But the kings were no longer interested in the impoverished country; the Elves were considered a foolish, primitive race beneath the consideration of civilized Men. The Miviorians supported him longest, but when the Elven mobs were beating on the palace door, they too abandoned Gwawl. Dragged from his palace, the pathetic prince was torn to pieces in the street.

Maenor, a popular hero of the late war, assumed Gwawl's throne. Now the myriad problems of reconstruction beset Maenor. The Dwarves had returned to Aws Noir and cut off the Elves' tribute rights. The economy suffered from the loss of the Ercii, whose industry and expertise was sadly missed.

Maenor took steps to open normal relations with all neighboring powers. Next, he saw that recovery meant the creation of an economy no longer strangled by high taxes, unreasonable regulation and the mismanagement of the workforce. He kept government expenses small by organizing a government with very few functionaries. Instead, he depended on the municipalities to manage more of their own affairs. The law code was rewritten to be short and efficient; the ancient tomes of outworn regulations were symbolically destroyed in a public fire.

Under Maenor, the Elves began to show an outgoing enterprise that few would have expected. A lumbering industry sprang up, floating good shipbuilding timbers down the River Sullen to Addat. Fur garments, art and metal work found favor in other countries. Textile-making, fishing, mining, farming, alchemy and other industries sped Elfland back to strength and health.

Not the least, Maenor's leadership put an end to the violence that had plagued Elfland's succession for so long. By the time of the great prince's death, his son Adillh was the single choice of all the people; they acclaimed him High Prince among universal celebration.

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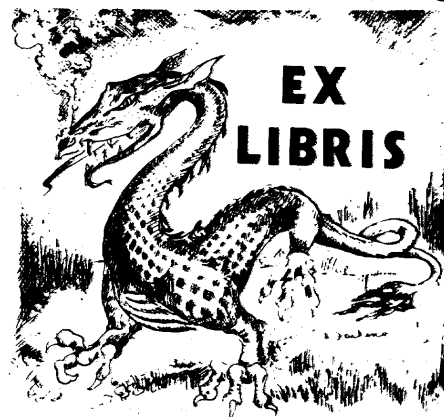
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Mapping the Dungeons II:

The International DM List for 1980

Updates, Address Changes, Alterations

The names and games listed on the following pages comprise the "last-minute" additions and alterations to Mapping the Dungeons II, the second International Dungeon Masters List which was published in the January issue of *The Dragon* (#33).

This update is published primarily as a service to those persons named under "New Listings," the first of three categories in the list. Some of them missed the deadline for publication in the January issue by just a few days; many others did not know that such a list of DMs was printed until they saw it in *TD* -33, and they responded by sending us a name and address before the March 15 deadline.

Actually, the deadline was stretched to March 17, partly because the 15th was a Saturday and partly because we couldn't disregard the expense that Jeff Tuttle of Vallejo, Calif., went to even though his letter didn't arrive until Monday. Jeff sent his name and address via special delivery, for the tidy sum of \$2.15. If it's worth that much to you, Jeff, we're glad to set aside four more lines of space for your entry.

The second group of names is "New Addresses, Deletions." Persons who sent in a change of address will find their new listing printed in its entirety, even if only one line of the address is different from the previous listing. Those whose listings should be removed from the list in *TD*-33, either because of an address change or another reason, are indicated by the word "DELETE" and the name set off by asterisks.

The third category is "Other Changes," which is almost entirely made up of persons who sent us alterations for the line which lists their game preferences. It was not the intended purpose of this update to list such changes. However, we realize that we didn't say precisely that such "updates" would *not* be accepted, so here they are. In the future, persons wishing only to change their game preferences will not be included in an update list, but will only be changed when a new overall list is published.

Readers of this list should note that it is designed to be used in conjunction with the large list in *TD* -33. The "Key to Games," for instance, is not repeated as a whole; only those games which are new

to the update are mentioned in "Key to Games, New Listings." Also, the addresses of those listed under "Other Changes" will not be found there (because they didn't change), but are printed in the proper location in *TD*-33.

A final note: The next listing of Dungeon Masters will be published no later than January 1981, possibly sooner than that if a large quantity of new submissions warrants it. *The Dragon* will announce the publication of such a list well in advance, so that persons wishing to submit new listings will have time to send us names and addresses.

A second final note: From this point onward, it will not be acceptable for one person to mail in multiple entries, unless each name and address is accompanied by that particular person's signature. This precaution is designed to insure that no one's name will appear without that persons' knowledge and permission. One person sent us 40 names and addresses for the update, which we could not use (except for the name of the person who sent the package) because we could not assume that all of those cards, filled out by the same person, were sent with the knowledge and permission of everyone involved.

KEY TO GAMES, NEW LISTINGS

Ch = Chainmail
Co = Commando
FG = Freedom in the Galaxy
MA = Metamorphosis Alpha
NW = Nuclear War
PB = Panzerblitz

PL = Panzer Leader
SF = Star Fleet Battles
SpC = Speed Circuit
StF = StarFire
WB = White Bear/Red Moon
WS = Wooden Ships & Iron Men

New Listings

ALABAMA

Leland Allen
24 Pine Crest Road
Mountain Brook AL 35223
*AD&D

Ed Gosnell
805 Huckleberry Lane
Birmingham AL 35226
*AD&D,T,WS,C&S,AG,O

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503 East Myrtle
Hanford CA 93230

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IOWA

Waterloo Fantasy Fighters
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*AD&D,B,T

KANSAS

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T,WR

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MICHIGAN

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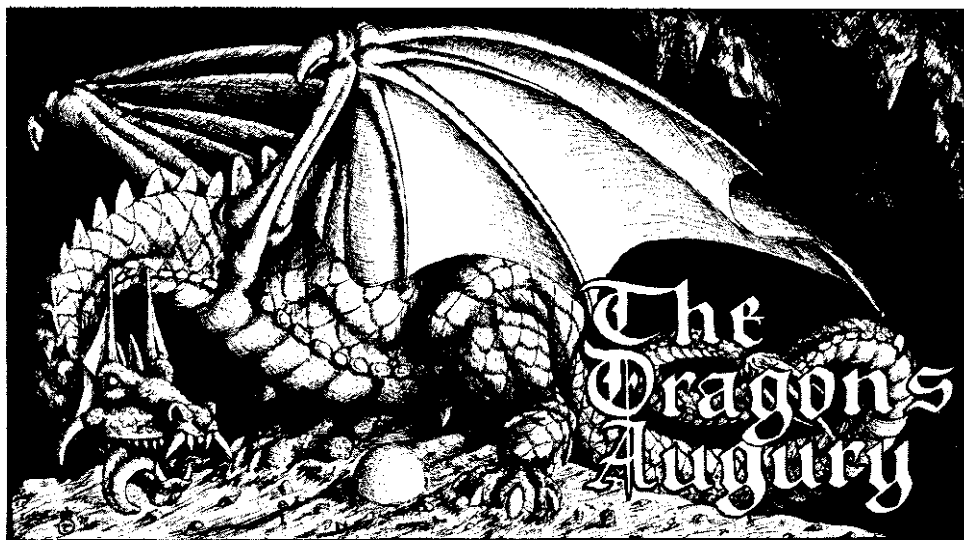
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Game review

Pearl Harbor

Produced by: GDW

Retail price: \$14.95

PEARL HARBOR is a strategic-level simulation of the war against Japan. There are three scenarios: 1941-1942, 1943-1945, and 1941-1945, with provisions for up to seven players. Armies, corps, multi-ship squadrons and air wings make up the majority of the 840 counters. Leaders, fortresses and bases make up the remaining units. The two unmounted map sheets portray Asia and the Pacific at a scale of 200 kilometers per hex.

The major fault of *PEARL HARBOR* is the playing surface. First, it's unmounted. Second, it's set up poorly. The sheets not only contain a map of the Pacific, but also an Imperial decision table, a weather table, a time record chart, several ERP reserve tables and force pools for each player. Players cannot sit by their respective countries and still reach their force pools without getting up and moving. GDW should have either made a separate ERP and force pool card for each player, similar to Avalon Hill's *Third Reich*, or put the force pool adjacent to or near its respective country. The same goes for the ERP cost table. ERP's are used to rebuild/mobilize units in the force pool. There is only one table for two to seven people.

The game is complex and can be slow-moving. Each turn is made up of five segments: decision segment, movement segment, reaction segment, combat segment and the reorganization segment.

The counters are 1/2" square and unusually thin, slightly reminiscent of a Metagaming Micro-game. Although the counters are thin, they are very well done with a glossy finish comparable to typical Avalon Hill counters.

The multi-player rules are very good. Usually the Japanese armed forces are divided between two players, one as the Japanese Army and the other as the Imperial Japanese Navy. Should these two ever have conflicting opinions of how to use the Japanese armed forces, they consult the Imperial decision table. This table represents the Emperor's decision.

The ERP (Economic Resource Point) system is very similar to *Third Reich's* BRP (Basic Resource Point) system. Yet that is not surprising, as both games were designed by John Prados.

The optional rules and variants are the best parts and every one possible should be used. The better ones are: CCP Guerrillas, who steal

Japanese ERP's; Banzai!, which causes an exchange instead of 'no effect' when Japanese troops are fighting for the greater glory of the Emperor; Asia for the Asians, which allows the Japanese additional units as part of an Asian recruiting program; and The War in Europe, which possibly gives the Japanese the use of some German units.

I like *PEARL HARBOR*, but some of my friends think it moves too slowly. When I saw it at first, I thought it was the battle (or butcher) at Pearl Harbor! Thank God for sub-titles! After looking at that (The War Against Japan, 1941-1945) and seeing it was designed by John Prados, I examined it closely and thought: "At last! *Third Reich* in the Pacific." I was only partially right, though. Imagine a Pacific *Third Reich* with almost every rule changed somewhat, and you'll have *PEARL HARBOR*. *PEARL HARBOR* is a quality game, and I highly recommend it. —Bryan Beecher

Game review

Magic Wood

Produced by: International Team Games

Retail price: \$17.95

Packaged in a beautifully illustrated box, *MAGIC WOOD* promises top-quality graphics at first glance. Unfortunately, to many gamers this may be its only appeal. The game is described as "Gnomes, Elves, Trolls, and Goblins . . . in the classical style of Northern tales." It turns out to be a simple "power" game in the genre of checkers or backgammon. The object is to surround pieces and trap them, thereby capturing them. This can be done by one player or by allies.

At least, I think this is how to play. The rules booklet is a poor translation from the Italian, and it took me several readings to figure out a playable set of rules. This is perhaps the game's greatest failing. Though there are no new concepts being used, these are the only rules I have ever encountered that are as poorly stated as the ill-fated first set of Quasar rules. Many areas are not covered or left ambiguous and unclear.

The board is nicely done in bright colors and coated with a clear plastic. It is both appealing to the eye and easy to follow. It fits together, made out of several pieces like a jigsaw puzzle, and this presentation doesn't seem to be any more or less convenient than a folding map board. The pieces are well drawn but evidently are intended

to portray characters in a light vein; even the trolls resemble nothing so much as a Cupid figure on a valentine. This gives the game a childish air which, combined with its simple method of play and lack of originality, probably will keep it from attaining any real popularity among devoted gamers.

There are no dice involved; each player is given a move of seven to divide between one or more pieces per turn. There are also three pieces that may be moved by any player on his/her turn which serve as mobile blocks to assist in trapping pieces. There is no magic or effect of magic in the game itself; presumably, the name is derived from a wood which contains the elves, gnomes, etc.

Considering the high price tag of *MAGIC WOOD*, most gamers will probably decide that there are better games that will offer more challenge and variety for the money. —William Fawcett

Game review

Belter

Mining the

Asteroids, 2076

Produced by: Game Designers' Workshop

Retail price: \$11.98

BELTER is not a bad game, it is just not an exciting one. It's a good example of why economic, political, and social simulations never displaced conflict simulations as the mainstay of the hobby, or even really supplemented them, for that matter. This "changing of the guard," predicted by the now-defunct Simulations Design Corporation, never transpired because much of the resolution of interaction that is implicitly handled by the combat system in a wargame would have to be specified case by case in the rules of one of these non-traditional games. They would soon collapse under their own weight.

As the subtitle suggests, *BELTER* deals with prospecting and exploiting the wealth of the Asteroid Belt around the time of the United States Centennial. Necessarily, it embraces economics and some power politics along with the more traditional combat and movement mechanics. *BELTER* appears to be an expanded version of an exploration and mining variant which GDW included in its errata for *Triplanetary*.

Players are cast in the roles of cantankerous asteroid miners, growing scraggly beards as they work for weeks combing oversized boulders for a strike. The players can start at varying resource levels, but a thoughtful handicap system ensures a balanced game. Players then utilize their assets to stake out claims. Though players generally imitate the actions of their fiercely individualistic character models (grimly fighting with mining lasers and heavier weapons over choice property, running from the law, and other escapades characteristic of any frontier), the players' final goals are much different. They are not content simply to scrape up enough to buy another load of fuel, food, and chewing tobacco. To realistically compete in meeting the victory conditions, these worshipers of *laissez faire* must sweat and scheme to erect small mining empires.

To this end, players prospect for ore, frozen gas or Contre-Terrene (anti-matter) shards. Mining ore and frozen gas is rather straightforward; just secure it and transport it to Marketplace to sell it. Contre-Terrene is much trickier, requiring special equip-

ment. And since it can be suicidal to handle the stuff, labor has an annoying habit of mutinying if forced to be around it. However, mining it is quite profitable. For "shai" frontiersmen, that is a necessary and sufficient condition.

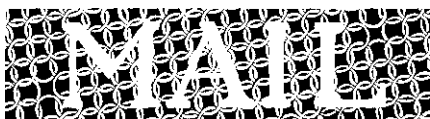
Ships may be purchased to transport personnel, equipment, and salable material. To aid in mining, smelters, bases and mines are useful investments; while lasers, missile racks, and particle accelerators are vital for protecting your rights in the wild and woolly asteroid badlands.

But like the high-society matrons they would undoubtedly despise, the prospectors' biggest headache is getting good help. GDW's innovative flair is prominently shown in the labor rules. While a player can depend on the counters representing himself and a few other dedicated personnel (of which he receives only a few, depending on his success), he must hire underlings from the labor pool. The catch is that hired help is undependable, and sought after by his opponents to boot.

The advanced game introduces the Peace Keeping Force, much like the marshals of the Old West. Ostentatiously entrusted to champion the interests of Earth, keeping the price of materials low, the PKF is not above accepting bribes from the other players. Notwithstanding, the independent miners chafe under what is perceived as the dictatorship of an oppressive Terra 150,000,000 miles away. So the possibility and mechanism for a Belt-wide revolt is incorporated.

The optional rules have a more stringent set of instructions for fuel, and as an acknowledgement of the game's slow initial pace, a bank financing scheme to speed up the tempo.

While admittedly a bit dull, *BELTER* has some interesting facets, GDW's fine graphics, and no glaring faults going for it, except for the unavoidable paperwork. It's not a blockbuster in the mold of *Imperium* or *Traveller*, rather, it is another one of GDW's solid line of science-fiction games which the buyer can rely on to be playable, enjoyable, and generally worth the asking price.—Roberto Camino



(Form page 3)

as "... simulate a realistic 'feel' of play..." and "... melee mechanics that are truly realistic..." and "... the unavoidable trade-offs between playability and the 'realistic feel' of play..." Maybe I'm arguing semantics, but I still refute the concept of "realism" in fantasy role-playing games; call it "rationalized in a more logical fashion" and I might buy it (although whose logic do we use?), but not "more realistic."

Actually, it seems that, in principle, Mr. Holsinger, Mr. Sapienza, and I all agree, as they both provide qualified definitions of what they refer to as "realism," Mr. Holsinger with his terms of "objective realism" vs. "subjective realism" or as he calls it, "game reality," and Mr. Sapienza with his "... realism of any sort is the kind of detail that helps convince you that the story you are in is truthful in its essence..." I personally prefer the term "rationalize," which my dictionary defines as "to bring into accord with reason or cause something to seem reasonable."

OK, semantics aside, rationalization, or game reality, or whatever, is of extreme importance in fantasy role-playing game design. As it

happens, when I co-authored *GAMMA WORLD*, I was responsible for writing the introductory material that sets up the environment of the game, extrapolating, or "rationalizing," if you will, the reasons for the game being played in the environment it is. I felt I could accept the possibility of man nearly destroying his world, then being forced to survive in the remains. But it is still fantasy—I could just have easily have set forth an invasion of aliens from Cappella blowing away the Earth, and set the same scenario. The rationalization would have been less effective, but the setting of the game would not have been any less "real."

The key to a good fantasy role-playing game, or a good fantasy novel, as Mr. Sapienza points out, is the "willing suspension of disbelief." This requires a careful rationalization of the facts as they are put forth to the player or the reader. In the case of *GAMMA WORLD*, I felt it was harder to willingly suspend my disbelief of aliens from Cappella than it was to accept man's penchant for violence over such intangibles as political and theological ideologies. Thus, GW has the intro it has.

Alright, having beaten that horse enough, on to my next point of disagreement: Where is the justification for the statement "D&D players are an unruly and fractious lot while Runequest types are more respectful of authority."? I am unwilling to suspend my disbelief of a sweeping generality. —Jake

Age of players

Dear Editor:

After having read your "Out on a Limb" column (TD #35), I would like to comment on the subjects mentioned in the letters from Jeff Wagner and Mario Pardillo, since both of their letters dealt with the age of players, and I'd like to add my 2 copper pieces, as it were.

My husband and I are both avid FRPGers and we game with a variety of groups consisting of many types of people—age, gender, preferences, etc. I've found it to be my own personal experience that the chronological age of a player matters very little—it's their personality, maturity, and knowledge of the game that determines whether the campaign or adventure is enjoyable or frustrating.

For instance, one group we game with consists of teenage boys 14 to 16 years of age. They have an exceptional working knowledge of the game (*AD&D*), and for the most part tend to play well within their chosen alignments, use their heads rather than their weapons when possible, and get along very well with all of us.

Another group we've gamed with consists of people 18 to 27 years old who, although they have learned the "specs" of the game, tend to try to take liberties with their actions, spells, weapons and requests of the DM, and will quibble endlessly when they don't get their way. Wouldn't you say that the teenagers show more maturity than these "adults"?

My last example is a group of college-age people who invited us to attend (as observers the first time, later to join if we so desired) a campaign, in which the entire adventure was no more than an afternoon of strategic mathematics (everyone had tables and charts galore, and a calculator in hand at all times), and I couldn't help but wonder why they even bothered to play a fantasy game at all when it was reduced to such cold, hard formulas. But, although I prefer more

imagination in my gaming, THEY all got along quite well among themselves, and it came down to a matter of personality and preference. Their ages ranged from approximately 17 to 24.

It is my considered opinion that unless a person is biased for some reason for or against any particular age group, this shouldn't be a major factor in player compatibility. I heartily agree with Jeff Wagner that *experience* counts quite a bit, but as I said before, it's maturity and personality that create harmony among players and between player and DM.

Mario Pardillo's suggestion that age be listed for both player and DM in the DM list could prove to be both benefit and detriment in many cases. Therefore, I would suggest that it remain optional to list age, so that those who have defined preferences could state them, and those who do not can leave the field open for a greater variety of responses.

(Mrs.) Lori Tartaglio

(Age-35 years)—Mercerville, NJ

'Inspiring'

Dear Dragon Staff:

I have thoroughly enjoyed 1980 with the *Dragon* so far. In particular I am writing in regard to Karl Merris' "The Fell Pass," and "Doom-keep" by Brian Blume. These inspiring articles are what I, a fantasy gamer (*AD&D*), look for in your magazine. I hope many of your other readers feel the same way and tell you so. I would love to see articles like these published regularly. Continued success in '80; your fine product and *AD&D* take most of my spare time.

I also like your *Fantasysmith's Notebook*. The articles on painting miniatures are of great interest—I paint respectably but with your continued help I will arrive, also!

Tom Kliebhan—Winfield, IL

'Male oriented'

To the Editor:

Recently I have begun playing *D&D* and have come to enjoy the game very much. I have also begun buying issues of *The Dragon* to further my interest in this hobby. I have, however, found the magazines to be disappointing because they are so strictly male oriented. The stories in particular feature men who adventure out on grand quests, slay beasts, and discover vast treasures with women who remain subservient by their sides. I am sure there are exceptions to my complaint, but they are few and far between. I have found that not only is *The Dragon* guilty of this, but other fantasy material as well. It would greatly increase my enjoyment, as well as that of other women who are becoming interested in playing *D&D*, if we could more easily identify with the articles in this magazine. That could only be accomplished by featuring women in them, too.

Kathleen McCauslin—East Lansing, MI

Ah, were it as simple as having a file labeled "Fiction, female protagonists," from which to select. I wish we did. Unfortunately, we don't, and I take a small amount of offense from Ms. McCauslin's assumption that we at *THE DRAGON* are somehow discriminating against women.

I will not put forth the argument that the history and legends from which heroic fantasy

fiction is drawn come from a time period that was traditionally and culturally male dominated. That's a cop-out.

What I will point out is that 98% of all material submitted to us at THE DRAGON has been written by male authors—and this accounts for the male orientation of the magazine. Let me explain that a bit, for those of you who have never tried your hand at writing. It is extremely difficult for a writer to write from the viewpoint of someone of the opposite sex—at least, it is difficult to do it well. And, our primary goal here at the magazine is to present the highest quality writing we receive. Therefore, since the great majority of our writers are male, the best of that writing is male-oriented (not that we receive many pieces of fiction written from female viewpoints by male writers—but you see my point).

Like Mark Twain said, "Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody does anything about it." We've received several letters to "Out on a Limb" from women complaining about the lack of fiction with female protagonists and lack of articles written by women. Don't just write a letter about it—write an article or a short story for us! And at the very least, don't take the attitude of the woman who sent in a letter last week and, after complaining bitterly about the lack of material by women writers appearing in THE DRAGON, added at the bottom of her letter, "Do not publish this letter!"

Quality writing, regardless of the sex of the author, is what we print in THE DRAGON. We'd like to have more female perspectives, just for the change in tone and feeling of what we do publish, but we're not about to start some sort of quota system to insure some artificial and arbitrary mix of gender of authors. Check out Cynthia Frazer's short story "Oasis" that appeared in our March issue, or Colleen Bishop's article on Libraries in D&D in this month's issue. They're well written and, as it happens, written by women. As Al Ubell might say, "Ladies, go forth and write!"—Jake

'Diversity of TD'

Dear Editor,

I would like to nominate TD #35 for The Royal Order of the Timely Arrival. It was as if you knew exactly what I wanted. In only two days, my copy is showing age due to the handling it has received from the other eight people who have read through it.

I had just started working on a complete table of encumbrance for other items when The Dragon appeared in my mailbox. I needed this type of table for a tournament I am running in May and this is saving me some valuable time. The red pen has swept through my AD&D books (Monster Manual, Players Handbook, and DMG) and a lot of questions have been cleared up. It is amazing how much confusion can be dispelled by changing a sentence like the correction made in the Mace of Disruption description. I hope that any other addenda will appear in future issues.

Traveller is played more and more in this area, so the variants in this issue and previous ones have been read with eager eyes. Unfortunately, it looks like I will need to hire a spotter because I know my Traveller ref is going to throw one (at least) of those black holes at us. The diversity of The Dragon is one of the main reasons why it is so well liked in my group. Keep on publishing material for other games. Al-

though I do not play it, Runequest is also popular here and the "Questers" have been wondering when you will be doing some articles on their game.

I agree with Howard Cohen, who appeared in the "Out on a Limb" column in TD #35, on two points. The first is the chronic misuse of wishes. I have found, however, that a player will reconsider a far-fetched wish if the DM gives him a nice smile when he suggests it. If they still insist on using a wish like one that would raise him eight levels, the DM can fall back on Mr. Cohen's suggestion and raise him eight levels . . . into the air.

Mr. Cohen's second point is that the campaign is the PLAYERS' fantasy. Because of this, a DM must be careful not to ruin it for them. This is especially applicable when death is the subject. People become turned off to AD&D if they spend an hour or so writing up a character who is killed within another hour. Although the above example is an extreme, a DM should give much consideration before announcing a character's demise. I am not saying that a player should never die. If this were the case, my world would be overrun with kamikazes who knew they could not die. If a player deserves it, he should die, but make sure he deserves it.

If there is no way to avoid killing someone in a given situation, consider NPC's and hirelings first. If you feel that a player should die when he becomes too powerful, then do not let him become too powerful. If it does happen, remedy it, but not by teleporting the guy to Tiamat's lair. A Wraith and a lightning bolt can do wonders in removing excess magic and extra levels. Whenever the question of player death arises, think about how you, the DM, would feel if you were the character's creator.

Finally, the clincher that helped make this issue my favorite so far was J. D. 's conclusion to "Dragonquest." "I'm chaotic and I don't care," is already becoming a favorite saying here, and his balrog cartoon brought back many memories. Thanks for the great issue.

Chris Warack—Redlands, CA

'Poor taste'

Dear Editor:

The cover of #35 was a blast! I had to do a double-take to make sure I was really seeing what I was seeing, but once I was certain I didn't stop laughing for some minutes. Mr. Foglio de-

serves hearty congratulations for "Snowmen of Doom."

Unfortunately, I do not feel so good about Mr. Fawcett's article, "Angels in Dungeons and Dragons." Yes, I did read the article's opening statement about the source material being both religious and fictional in nature. As a DM, I will admit that the concept of having angels for the deities of a mythos is intriguing. However, it is the source material that bothers me. Let us remember that much of the article was derived from the Holy Bible, and as far as I'm concerned that is not a book to be taken lightly! Games are games, but the Word of God is not something to be used in such a manner.

I happen to believe in the Bible. However, I also happen to believe in the Constitution, and I respect your right to print what you wish. But I think that "Angels in Dungeons and Dragons" was in extremely poor taste.

Vaughn L. Shepherd—Lafayette, IN

'Bravo'

Dear Editor:

Bravo for the fine article on angels that you printed in TD #35. William Fawcett is a fine fantasy player, and has done the hobby a great service in this and other well-researched and written articles. We should have as many angels as we can get, even though there will never be as many of them as demons or devils. Perhaps Bill could also do an article on warrior saints.

By chance, my normal Bible readings happened upon one of Bill's texts just before I read the article. There I found an answer to a question that had bothered me? What is a Fantasysmith? I had thought only that a Fantasysmith should be a craftsman who produced fantasy. Solomon had the idea much clearer than I, however:

"... a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men. . . ."—2 Chronicles, 2: 7

My own personal cunning is much lower than that of this type of Fantasysmith, but a fictitious player character could have those skills that I lack as well as the few I possess.

If you would be so kind, please publish the snippet I enclose. It comments on a fine angelic warrior figure which doesn't exactly meet Bill's height standards, but certainly could fit the type.

Fantasysmith

RAL PARTHA'S ES41 AS AN ANGEL - A CONVERSION

Much of Tom Meier's work is well detailed. Yet the modeller can change the figures' appearance very simply. ES41, "Wind Lord" is a good figure to convert into an angel.

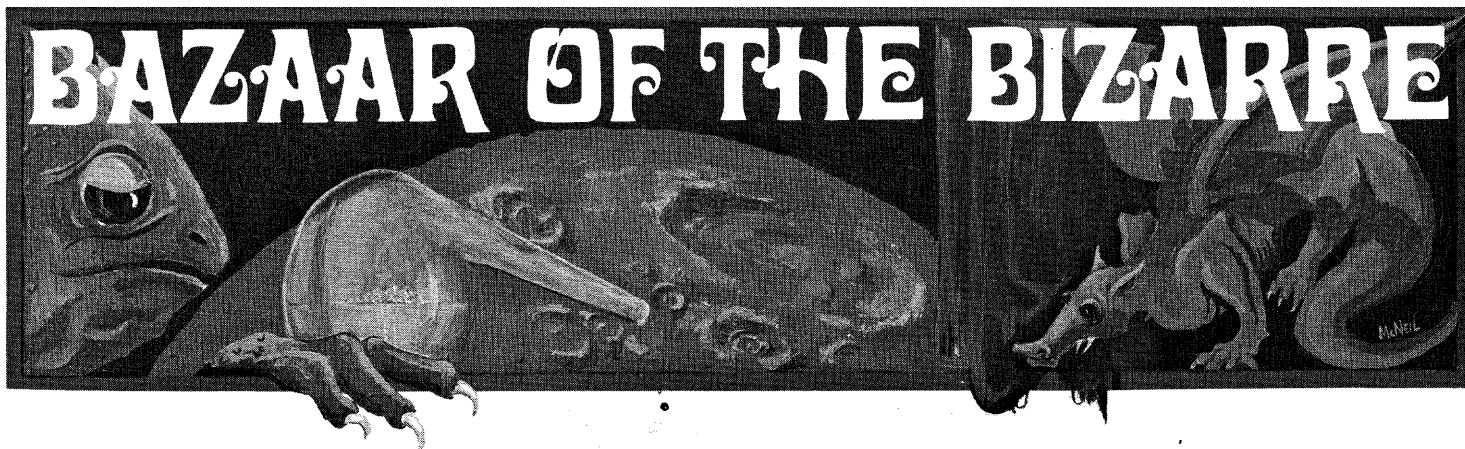
Note how sweep of wings is combined with arms & spear to strengthen the model & allow it to be used in rough game play without breaking.



The face & high stock collar seemed too constraining to me, though, so I filed off some features & used titanium white to paint on a new nose & beard and to emphasize new eyebrows. This also changed the helmet.



The left wing was also slightly filled in because it bent as if melted like Icarus! These wings can easily be multicolored like the angels shown on a recent Xmas stamp.



Yefar's Magic Mirrors

Gerald Strathmann

Yefar, a mage of some renown a few ages past, had a small problem with burglars and thieves. He didn't mind them that much, since his treasure was well-guarded, but since he was of the chaotic persuasion he liked to point out the error of the thieves' ways by creating petty (?) inconveniences at the most inopportune times. In order for Yefar to partake in this pleasure, he had to know the identity of the footpads, so he created an innocent-looking mirror that recorded anything that passed before it.

It is said that he died before creating the perfect Mirror of Memory, and that he discarded many of the imperfect ones. But a legend tells that the last mirror he made caused his death, for the mirror needed a very great mnemonic capability, and Yefar, being quite senile in his old age, contributed his own memory.

To determine the type of mirror found, use the following table (All mirrors appear identical):

01-40	Type I, Mirror of Speed
41-75	Type II, Mirror of Confusion
76-90	Type III, Mirror of Memory
91-99	Type IV, Mirror of Allseeing
00	Yefar's Great Mirror

Type I: This Mirror has a 60° field of vision, and plays back all that passes before it at ten times normal speed. The picture is blurred and hard to interpret. EP Value: 300. GP Value: 800.

Type II: This Mirror has a 60° field of vision, and plays back all that passes before it at two times normal speed, but plays it backwards, starting from the most recent event and going back in time. EP Value: 450. GP Value: 1900.

Type III: This Mirror has a 60° field of vision, and plays back all that

Rod of Singing

Robert Plamondon

The Rod of Singing is a magical item usable by both Clerics and Magic-Users, although neither class will appreciate its charms.

When discovered, the Rod behaves like some useful rod (pick one from *Greyhawk*, or *DMG*), but between five and 30 minutes after picking up this device, the magician or Cleric will begin to wave it as if conducting an imaginary band, and will sing loudly and off-key. This noise has a one-third chance per turn of attracting wandering monsters and, if the monsters are intelligent, -1 the singer's reaction dice (due to the poor music quality).

The rod prevents the casting of spells by interfering with speaking and gesturing. It adheres magically to the hand and can be removed only by a *Remove Curse* or *Wish* spell. The person under the rod's control will continue singing as long as he is conscious, and will resist attempts to knock him out.

passes before it at two times normal speed. EP Value: 800. GP Value: 3200.

Type IV: This mirror has the powers of a Type III Mirror with a 120° field of vision. EP Value: 900. GP Value: 3800.

Yefar's Great Mirror: This Mirror has all the powers of a Type IV Mirror, but also records in total darkness and can record invisible objects. EP Value: 1700. GP Value: 4600.

To replay what has been recorded, the mirror must be physically held in both hands. It erases anything it replays, and begins to record again when released, erasing anything that was not replayed. A *Forget* spell will cancel the last 24 hours of memory, making the field blank. All Mirrors except the Great Mirror need some light to function properly, and will replay with the same illumination in which the subject was recorded.

The Mirror does not record when something took place, merely what took place, and will replay in the order things were recorded. So, unless the user knows when the mirror was put down, he will not know when the images took place. *Haste* and *Slow* spells will allow the user to speed up or slow down what is shown, but all images will be shown in the order they were recorded.

The Discus Shield

Roger E. Moore

This device functions normally as a +3 medium-sized shield, circular in shape with the edges rounded inward (like a "flying saucer" or a modern Frisbee). The user may cast this shield like a discus at an opponent. It will fly out, strike a glancing blow on its target, and return. A minimum strength of 16 and a minimum dexterity of 12 are required to throw the shield properly. The shield is cast with one hand. Note that the caster need not make a roll "to hit" in order to catch the shield when it comes back at the end of the melee round. The shield has a maximum range of 270 feet (9").

The damage done when the Discus Shield strikes an opponent varies inversely with the range of the target, as shown in the table below. Opponents may attempt to catch the shield, but must roll to strike AC -6 and have both hands free; otherwise the opponent will take the maximum possible damage. This attempt to catch the shield may only be made if the caster has made a successful "to hit" roll to begin with. The shield's flight path is unaffected by winds up to hurricane force. The caster is -2 "to hit" at medium range and -5 "to hit" at long range.

Distance of target	Damage from shield strike
0'-90' (0"-3")	2-8 points
91'-180' (3"-6")	1-6 points
181'-270' (6"-9")	1-4 points

This device must be used at a penalty to hit unless the user has opted to take expertise with it as a possible weapon. Because the shield is blunt-edged, Clerics may use it as a weapon, as well as Fighters and Assassins. Experience Point Value: 1000; GP Sale Value: 10,000.

Dragon's Bestiary

Vulturehounds

Created by Chris Chalmers and Dan Pollak

FREQUENCY: *Rare*
 NO. APPEARING: 4-24
 ARMOR CLASS: 5
 MOVE: 18"/10"
 HIT DICE: 2
 % IN LAIR: 40%
 TREASURE TYPE: *J(x10)*
K(x10), L(x5), M,N
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1(3)
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: (1-3/1 -3)/1 -6
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Nil*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*
 INTELLIGENCE: *Animal*
 ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
 SIZE: *S (4' Long)*
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

Vulturehounds are a bizarre combination of vulture and wild dog. They have long, grayish, shaggy hair, and dog-like legs ending in sharp, curved talons. Protruding from their sides are a pair of small wings, and they have a sharp beak in place of a muzzle.

These voracious carnivores foray out from their dens in hunting packs in search of food, which they drag back to their lair to devour. The scant treasure found there will be from their previous victims.

In battle, Vulturehounds will rear up on their hind legs by flapping their wings, thus being able to attack with the two front talons and the beak. If unable to rear up in this fashion, they can only employ their beaks. These creatures gain their high Armor Class rating because of their speed and dexterity.

If Vulturehounds are found in their lair, there is a 50% chance of there being 3-12 pups. Pups have 1-4 hit points, cannot fly, and bite for 1-2 or 1-3 depending on size. Pups bring 500-1,000 g.p. on the open market; they can be trained for war, or hunting, because these animals have a keen sense of smell.





CLARENCE THE CLERIC



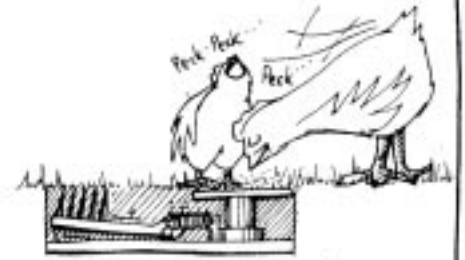
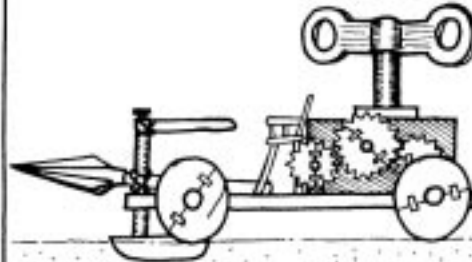
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ANIMAL MAGNETISM!"

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By Shaw

OR
"DON'T FOOL WITH
MOTHER NATURE"

ANCIENT SPRING-POWERED SLOT RACER - WITH WARHEAD -



'BANTY BOOPER'

WATER FOUNTAIN

WATER AT LAST



FOUNTAIN FROG

'ANT MAULER' - HAND OPERATED -



How to tell if you're in or out of love

Kevin Hendryx

In view of the fact that more and more people of *both* sexes are entering the ranks of *Dungeons & Dragons* adventurers, I have established a list of definitions which broadly encompass the limits of romance vs. impartiality in the fantasy universe.

Dungeon Masters who allow your wives/girlfriends/paramours/whatever to run characters in their campaigns, take heed! Where on the following list do you fit in?

LOVE IS. . .

- when you stop collecting and painting orcs, trolls, gray ooze, and lizard men because she says they "look icky."
- when you agree to let her pay ten gold pieces extra for clothing to obtain "designer originals."
- when she always makes her saving throws.
- when the treasure chests she opens are never booby-trapped.
- when she "accidentally" finds a Potion of Healing every time she's down to one hit point.
- when everyone else in the party finds copper coins, but she finds platinum.
- when, if she is a Magic-User, none of her spells backfire.
- when she never blunders across a Girdle of Sex Change.
- when she runs a 7th-level Cleric, and all her party meets are Zombies and Skeletons.
- when she runs an 8th-level Fighter and all her party meets are Kobolds.
- when she prays to her gods and they hear her.
- when she inadvertently calls the name of a demon, and he doesn't.
- when her party never meets more than two goblins at a time.
- when she can scream, set fire to the walls, and jump up and down on a sleeping dragon and he still doesn't wake up.
- when you paint female miniatures that look just like her.
- when she doesn't have to obey the maximum weight-carrying capacity.
- when she has her own personal bodyguard of twelve 10th-level Paladins.
- when she is instantly recognized as a long-lost relative by every 14th-level Witch her party meets.
- when she always does double damage.
- when there are three knobs attached to the same door, and she turns the one that opens it.
- when the only wandering monsters she encounters in the Wild are kindly Pilgrims, benevolent Elves, Unicorns, Lawful Clerics, Super-Heroes, and her patron deity.
- when her character is never killed.



DON'T LOOK NOW, WIZ, BUT ISN'T THAT A MEDALLION OF ESP HE'S WEARING?

HATE IS. . .

- when you deliberately purchase hundreds of the most disgusting-looking monsters available, paint them in sickly hues of black, gray, and olive, and line them up beside her plate at breakfast.
- when she runs an Elf, and continually encounters Evil Dwarves with fanatical anti-Elven hysterias.
- when she gives alms to a beggar and contracts bubonic plague.
- when her characters always have their charismas lowered to three.
- when she always starts with the minimum number of hit points.
- when she adventures on the 1st level and enters through a one-way door into the throne room of the Dragon Queen.
- when everybody who attacks her wields a poisoned weapon.
- when she activates traps on a roll of 1-6 on a six-sided die.
- when she is always made to walk at the front in a strange corridor.
- when the noise of her heart beating attracts the attention of a dinosaur herd.
- when every piece of cursed armor she puts on cannot be taken off.
- when she walks into a teleportation room and materializes in the middle of a vampire convention.
- when the pits she falls into have quicksand at the bottom.
- when merchants always cheat her.
- when the Arch-Druid happens to wander by just as she finishes cutting a load of firewood from a nearby sacred grove.
- when all the rings she finds turn out to be made in Taiwan.
- when she hurls a fireball spell at a group of mummies and the DM tells her the dungeon is made of wood.
- when rats eat her food supply while she rests at night.
- when the DM rules that her character has fallen in love with a gelatinous cube.
- when the DM tells her the +5 mithril mail she found is too small for her to fit into.
- when she takes a pike on her expedition and every room of the dungeon is six feet square and six feet high.
- when her party never meets fewer than 200 goblins.
- when her character always goes hopelessly insane.



"YOU KNOW, I THINK I GOT TOOK ON THAT 'FLOATING DISK' SPELL"

THE STORY OF Jasmine

CREATED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

Darlene

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WITH TREPIDATION HER
RETAINERS ACCOMPANY HER
INTO AN UNCERTAIN LAND...



NO BOOK CAN TRULY TELL THE FANTASTIC
STORY OF JASMINE. VERY FEW
KNOW WHAT I KNOW—AND WHAT
I KNOW IS STRANGE INDEED...
GATHER QUICKLY FOR THIS TALE
BEGINS AGES AGO WITH A
YOUNG PRINCESS TRAVELLING
CHEERFULLY TO HER DOOM!



WE MUST TURN BACK—
THIS IS TOTAL
MADNESS!

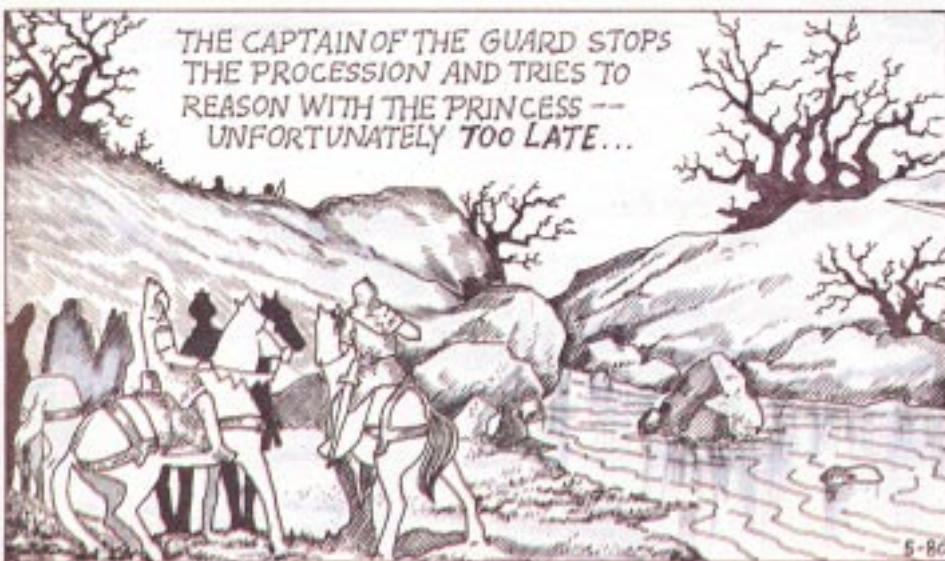


MADNESS—OR...
ENCHANTMENT: BUT
HOW? HOW COULD
THAT SCHEMING
PRINCE GET HER
TO TRAVEL SO
RELIGIOUSLY TO
HIS BROODING
FORTRESS?



EVERYTHING SHE SEES IS SO BEWILD-
ERING AND BEAUTIFUL, I DOUBT WE
CAN DISSUADE HER— BUT...

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD STOPS
THE PROCESSION AND TRIES TO
REASON WITH THE PRINCESS —
UNFORTUNATELY TOO LATE...



NEXT: THE AMBUSH



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Please note three things about this ad.

(1) The figure is shown four times actual

size. Believe it or not, it's really in 15mm

scale. Like that detail? So do we . . .

(2) This is a quality magazine, as earth maga-

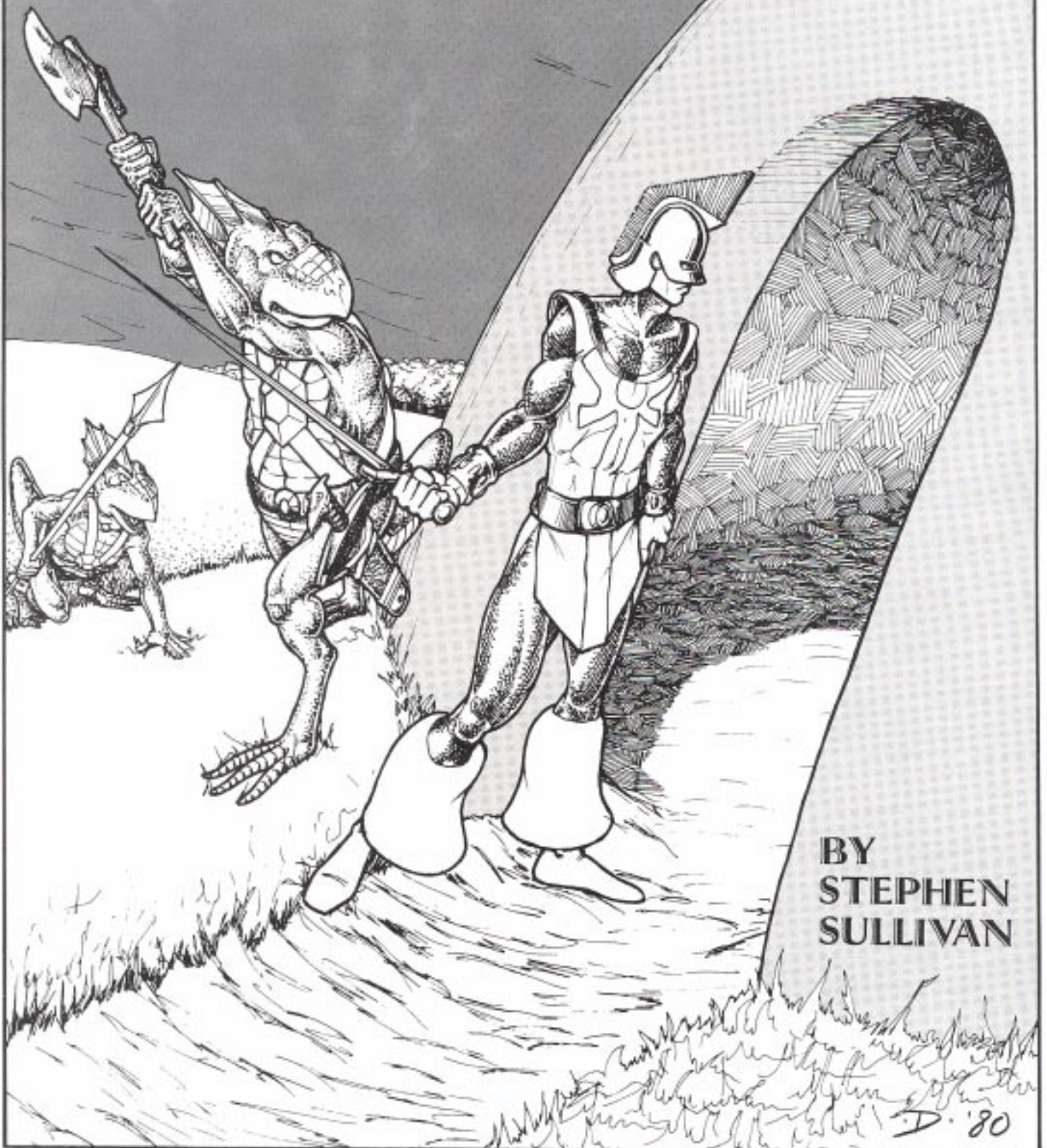
zines go — but it's STILL upside down.

Our ad, as usual, is right side up.

(3) The postcard distorts the doshes.



THE PIT OF THE ORACLE



BY
STEPHEN
SULLIVAN

THE PIT OF THE ORACLE

INTRODUCTION

The Pit of The Oracle is a game module designed for use with the rules of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. It can be used by itself as a self-contained campaign (or as a springboard to a larger campaign), or it can be easily incorporated into an existing campaign.

Many non-essential specifics have been left out, enough so that each Dungeon Master can flesh out the area to his/her taste, or to conform to the setting of an existing world. This "incompleteness," while making the module more adaptable, also insures that no two campaigns in and around The Pit of The Oracle will ever be alike. This enables a DM to be a player in someone else's campaign without having too much advance knowledge of what the campaign world is like.

The openness of construction does not mean that The Pit of The Oracle is not ready to play as it is. It can be used exactly as presented, providing that the material is read thoroughly before starting to play, so that the many interrelationships between parts of the module can be fully understood.

Map A—Narrion and the Land Surrounding

The small town of Narrion is located precariously on the very edge of the wild country, and as such is often a stopping place for adventurers going from one area to the other. There is not terribly much trouble in wandering by day down the small roads through the large expanses of untended grasslands which extend southeastward between Narrion and the next nearest town (except for an occasional bandit or two)—but the legends of the blasphemous things that roam the deserted plains by night are numerous and particularly horrible (at least, to the pale-hearted folk of the town).

LOCH LAKAN

To the north and west of the town lie the cold, dark waters of Loch Lakan, an unremarkable fresh water lake in all respects except for the fact that local legend makes it out to be the home of a horrible monster. The creature is actually a very large Plesiosaurus (160 HP) who differs from the normal beasts (aside from its size) in the fact that it swallows its prey alive on a roll of 10% (+2) over what it normally needs to hit, or on a roll of 20 in any case. On a roll of 1 on a d6, the beast will notice anything moving in or on the lake and try to make a snack of the intruder. Because of this creature, none of the locals fish or swim in the lake—though about once a year some foolhardy child will take it into his/her head to defy the town elders and take a quick dip. About once out of every 10 times the child returns, usually very shaken up.

How the creature came to be in the lake is a disputed matter in local legend. Some insist that long ago a black-hearted star fell from the sky into the center of the lake and spawned the thing. Other tales insist that the monster is the result of a witch's or wizard's (the legends vary) curse upon the lake and the lost fishermen of Narrion (whose cries, some insist, can still be heard at night). Still others insist that there have never been fishermen in Narrion because the monster has always been in the lake. And a final faction insists that when the Stalker first came to Narrion it brought the creature with it as its pet. There are many other such tales, but they are all variations on these themes.

THE MOOR

To the northeast of the town lies the Moor (often called "The Haunted Moor" by the old wives of the town), through which the Moor Road runs on its way to the Jarkung Lands and the edge of the wild. There are numerous legends about the Moor, most of them concerning spirits of one type or another, such as the headless bandit

who rides the road on the nights when the moon is but a pale sliver in the night sky, or the werewolf ghost of Kevin O'Korr, or the will-o-wisps which dart here and there among the treacherous bogs (which, some claim, cause the strange glows which can be seen on the moor at nights) or even the dreaded banshee who howls her loneliness on cold nights. Whether these rumors have a basis in fact or not, the Moor can certainly be a treacherous place to wander in unguided, for there are dreadful mires which seem to appear from nowhere and suck unwary wanderers to their deaths in the peat far below.

Other moor legends speak of a fell race of darkling beings who live somewhere, perhaps in tunnels beneath the bog's surface. Some few insist that the bog is the home of the Lurkers in Darkness, who are generally accepted as coming from the Shunned Hills. And to complete the assemblage of moor legends, there is even a story of a wizard throwing a curse on the finest farmland in the area, causing it to die and become a bog festering with evil.

THE JARKUNG LANDS

If one were to follow the Moor Road northeast from Narrion for many miles through the Moor and past the end of that desolate bog, one would eventually come to the Edge of The Wild and the Jarkung Lands. Little is known about this area by the people of Narrion, for few ever venture to the Edge of The Wild and fewer still return from that direction. It is known that beyond the Moor lies a vast, desert-like land full of boulders and strange rock formations and sand. It is here that there is said to exist a half-devil race whom men call Jarkung. Not much is known of them but they are generally very hostile toward mankind, and the villagers are very afraid of them and thankful of their remoteness. To talk of the Jarkung will bring a serious look to most any face in Narrion, for they are generally accepted as existing—even if they are not exactly what they're reputed to be.

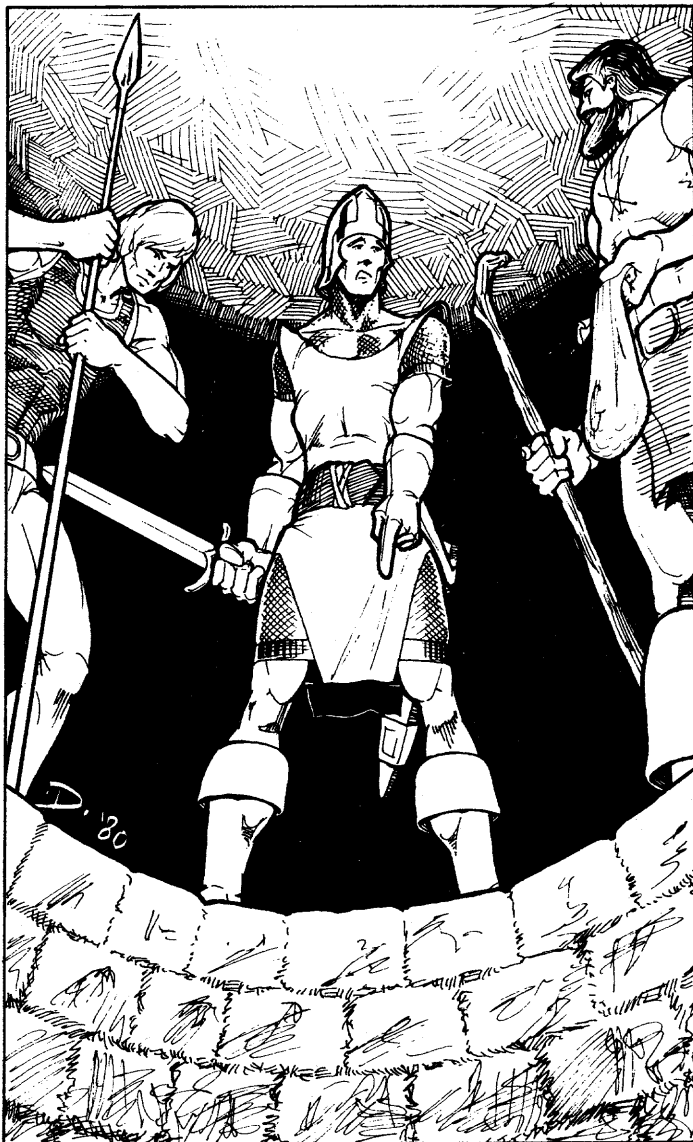
GREENWOODS

To the west of Narrion, between Loch Lakan and the Narrion Road, are situated two small patches of forest called the Greenwood. Most folk generally agree that there is nothing remarkable about these two patches of trees, but there are a few who insist that the wood was once part of a great forest which, upon being cursed by a wizard, withered and died.

THE ORACLE

Southwest of Narrion, in the mound that has come to bear his name, dwells the far-famed Oracle of Narrion. This aged seer has lived in the pit below the Rock of the Oracle longer than anyone in Narrion would even venture to guess. The townsfolk are grateful for his presence, both because of the travelers that come to the small town to pay homage to the seer and for the most fabulous predictions that he makes on their behalf—especially concerning the dread Stalker. An amazing number of the Oracle's predictions have come true, especially concerning when the monster will strike. He does not always speak of the question asked but sometimes refers to more important events in the near future. The townsfolk have not always understood his cryptic messages in time to do anything about the portents. (In fact, there have been few times when the warnings have not made any difference at all, but to the people this doesn't seem to matter, for he is *their* oracle and they will speak no ill of him.)

To consult the Oracle, one goes to his mound and enters the large rock on the summit through the cave opening on the north side. In the dimly lit, rough-walled cavern a small black hole can be seen in the center of the room. One must approach the 5'-diameter hole with utmost reverence and drop a sacrifice (gold, food, etc.) down the shaft to where the Oracle dwells below. One question may be asked of the seer.



Then the wait begins. The Oracle has been known to ponder for nearly a day before answering some questions put to him. If a day and a night pass and the question has not been answered, then no answer will be received, either because the sacrifice was too small or because the ways of the Oracle are strange. In any case, one should then retire and wait at least a day before trying to consult the Oracle again.

If one gets an answer, it will usually be fathomable in proportion to the sacrifice given: the more valuable the sacrifice, the more plain the answer. This, however, is not always the case. Once one answer is given a second question may be asked, but it must be on another subject in order to have a chance of it receiving an answer, for oracles are loath to explain their cryptic remarks. (A second sacrifice for a second question at this point wouldn't hurt, either.)

The Oracle usually answers in riddles or rhymes or combinations thereof.

THE BLACK FOREST

This dark, dense mass of trees stretches from just past the Mound of the Oracle far to the southeast of the land beyond Narrion. No one knows what lurks at the center of the Black Forest, though it is generally agreed to be either a very ancient castle, or a dragon, or both. A few people think that this is where the Lurkers in Shadow originate from, and the wood has been said to contain nearly every other type of abomination as well. As is often the case among the folk of Narrion, some insist that the forest has been twisted and cursed by an evil wizard, and perhaps even this is true.

THE SHUNNED HILLS

These bleak hills are generally accepted to be the place from which the dread Lurkers in Shadow originate. It is said that the obscene creatures lurk and breed in caverns deep in the bowels of the hills, and only venture forth at night when the moon is dark to garner human captives for their unholy rites. The people fear these beings second only to the Stalker himself. It is said that the Lurkers' tunnels honeycomb the entire length of the Shunned Hills. Some even suggest that they reach underground into the very heart of Narrion, and that the Lurkers and the Stalker are one and the same. But not many souls believe this premise, for it is said that quite some years ago a mighty hero killed one of the Lurkers and displayed its body for a long time in the public square, but the attacks of the Stalker did not stop. (The small, lizard-like body of the Lurker has since either been lost or was thrown away because of the legendary stench of the carcass.)

In actuality the Lurkers are a large band of troglodytes who live in a series of honeycombed mazes beneath the Shunned Hills. They generally live up to most of what is attributed to them.

NARRION

Narrion is an unremarkable town situated not far from the edge of the wilderness. Being so close to the wild country, the town has found it necessary to have a large (30') wooden wall (with a small parapet) constructed around its perimeter in order to keep certain undesirable types from raiding the town after dusk. To this end there are also guard platforms on the northernmost and southernmost corners of the wall. The town's two gates, the great Front Gate and smaller Moor Gate, are closed promptly at dusk and are not reopened for ANY reason until dawn.

The shops of the town are usually open for an hour or two after sunset, but the proprietors can usually be called to business at any hour by a sharp rap on the door. It is recommended, however, that anyone doing so have just cause, or face the wrath of a very disgruntled shopkeeper.

The taverns are generally open until two or three in the morning, but can be persuaded to stay open longer if there's a profit to be made. The inns are normally open all night (or at least can be "opened" with a good shout), to take care of the few who are always straggling in from the bars at odd hours, and also because it's a sort of tradition for inns to be open all night (after all, no one legally enters town after dark). You can usually get a drink at any time of night at any inn (though if you wake someone up just for a drink, it may cost you dearly).

The laws of Narrion are basically common-courtesy rules. If someone doesn't like the way you are acting in his place of business, he has the right to throw you out. If you give a shopkeeper any trouble, he will call the town guard (and the town guard does not like to be disturbed, being basically lazy in regards to working), and the guard will throw you out. If you're caught stealing the offended party can either demand that you pay for the item (and they may not give you the item), throw you out on your ear, or bring you to public trial, which is also what happens if you have committed a gross offense of one kind or another.

Public trial consists of bringing the accused party before an assembly of the entire population of the town (usually at noon, but it can be in the middle of the night if the case is urgent) at the town gallows. The accuser presents his case before the assemblage. The town then decides the fate of the accused and, if he is found guilty, the punishment. (Remember how carried away large groups of people can get, especially if they have been awakened from a sound sleep.)

The accused cannot speak in his own defense, but another may speak for him, or the accused may challenge the accuser to trial by combat. Dueling is legal in Narrion; however, the person challenged gets to choose the terms on which he fights. A duel in Narrion could be between an armed man and an unarmed challenger, and would still be legal. That is why town inhabitants will almost never choose trial by combat.

People traveling through the town may be charged a Visitors Tax of 1 g.p. by the innkeepers for the first night of their stay in town. This

small surcharge is to help defray the cost of maintaining the town's guard. Expenses not covered by the tax are taken care of in any way the town can come up with such as fines for crimes, etc. The innkeepers and shop owners usually make generous donations to the guard as well.

THE STALKER

This is the horrible monster that keeps the town of Narrion in a constant state of fear. It strikes mercilessly and without respect for age, sex, or social prominence, in a seemingly random fashion. Numerous attempts have been made to capture and destroy the beast, and despite the help of the Oracle's prophesies, all attempts have met with unmitigated failure, though once or twice a number of men have managed to meet the thing head-on.

For a horror that is so familiar to the townspeople, the description of the "Stalker" (which some unmemorable person dubbed the creature hundreds of years past) is still much disputed. The most accepted version of what the Stalker looks like is a huge, hulking shadow-like thing, 9' tall, with many eyes, or insect eyes, and a monstrous, gaping maw lined with razor-sharp, six-inch-long teeth.

Other descriptions are a lion-headed creature with huge, leathery bat-wings; a man-frog with the legs of a bull and tail of a dragon an amorphous blob, with a scaly hide which can grow limbs and mouths at will; a demon or a devil; or any one of a number of equally dissimilar creatures or combinations.

In actuality, if anyone could ever see through the darkness (night, not a spell) and their own fear (which is unlikely) the creature they would see would be a huge, shambling, mottled green toad-thing with 2-inch-long claws and a maw like a bear trap. It stands 8' tall at its massive shoulders (its head is set slightly lower) and atop its froggy head are two sets of red and black liquid eyes, the larger ones set where they would normally be and the small ones above them on the monster's forehead. Men who have seen these grossly inhuman eyes have been known to lose all courage and run from battle, and these men will never be able to give an even remotely correct description of the monster. (Note that this fear is not due to any ability that the Stalker has but is merely a factor of the inhuman and unfamiliar way it moves and fights. Check morale often if NPCs confront the beast. It is extremely terrifying.) It often laughs in a dry, croaking voice.

THE TOWN

The following outline of the town of Narrion provides only the barest description of the town's houses, stores and inns, and the people who run the stores and inns, as well as a few of the town's other more exceptional citizens. The remainder of the details have been left for individual DM's to fill in. This adds a unique touch to each "Narrion" so that no two will probably ever be alike, thus creating the possibility that one DM may run in another DM's world even if both are familiar with Narrion as presented here.

In general, most of the townspeople should be of very low

level, with only a few exceptional people standing between the town and its downfall to the forces of the outside world.

Not only would a town full of super-characters take away the town's atmosphere, it would also destroy the threat of the Stalker, which is supposed to be what the players will conquer. If they defeat the monster then they may certainly populate the town with whatever they like, providing that they do not fall under the "Angry Villagers" section given later.

NARRION DETAIL MAP A

1) (F/2)

2) (MF/2)

3) (F/2)

4) (U/1)

5) *The Blue Gill Tavern* (T/1)—Hangout for local riffraff and hoods is known locally for its cheap booze and frequent fights. It is a good place to make underworld connections but is not terribly good for picking up rumors or information. Both management and patrons tend to be tight-lipped. The Bartender is untrustworthy and a prolific liar on any subject when properly tipped.

6) (S/2)

7) (S/2)

8) (S/2)

9) (S/2)

10) *The Narrion Inn* (I/2)—This inn features a warm atmosphere, good food and drink, comfy rooms, a jovial, rotund Innkeeper/Barman, and fetching, but moral, serving girls. Many of the less sleazy locals spend time here after dark, having a drink, exchanging stories, and playing a competitive but friendly game of darts. A good spot for rumors but not as flashy as the Green Dragon Tavern (below).

11) *The Hut of The Witch Ilsa* (SH/2)—The Witch lives on the second floor of this building and runs a curio shop on the first floor. She is a third-level Magic-User who is constantly followed by a black cat which acts as her familiar.

Ilsa has Str-8, Int-16, Wis-12, Con-10, Dex-13 and Cha-6. Her alignment is Neutral (tending toward Evil). She looks very aged, but her age is not actually known. She walks with a cane (actually a *Staff of Withering*). It is whispered that almost anything can be bought in her shop. It is also whispered that she is responsible for the occasional disappearances in the town, generally attributed to the Stalker (this may be partially true), but the more sensible people of the town take no stock in these rumors. (It is also rumored that she uses her victims to restore her youth in some arcane manner, but this is even less widely believed.)

12) (S/2)

13) (U/2)

14) (S/2)

15) (S/2)

16) *The Temple of Apathy* (CH/1)—This temple houses the main religion of the people of Narrion. The religion preaches that only through the ignoring of day-to-day events can a true state of

KEY TO BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Each building in the town of Narrion is described by a letter-number code which provides the type of structure it is and the number of floors it has. For instance, MF/2 means a two-story, multi-family dwelling.

Building types are as follows:

CH = Church or Temple—a place of worship, usually attended by a priest or priestess.

Bk = Barracks—a one-room building which houses a large number of men such as the town guard.

I = Inn or Tavern—a building which can house travelers which usually contains a restaurant/bar area and stables for mounts and other animals.

F = Family—an average single-family dwelling, a multi-room structure, usually not particularly expensive.

MF = Multi-family—essentially similar to an "F" dwelling,

except that it houses more than one family in separate living areas.

S = Slum—a very run-down family-type dwelling, usually at least two stories high and usually a multi-family home.

SH = Shop/House—a building with space for a shop or store along with living space which is partitioned off or located on a separate floor. There is usually a description before the designation describing what kind of combination structure the building is.

U = Uninhabited—a building which is unoccupied, but which usually has a particular designated function. The "U" should be followed by a second designation to indicate this function, as in "U/F/2" to stand for an uninhabited, two-floor family dwelling. The type of each uninhabited house has been left up to the DM's determination. designations can be developed using the above guidelines.

oneness with God be reached. An often-quoted passage from the holy scriptures is, "God created the world in three days and then left it alone because it no longer directly concerned him." This philosophy has quite naturally kept any concerted effort from being organized to deal with the Stalker. The temple is run by one first-level Priest who will ignore anyone entering the temple who does not appear to directly concern him.

17) (MF/1)

18) (MF/2)

19) *The Town Livery*— Adventurers' horses may be housed here for a charge of 1 g.p. per night. The care is adequate and the watchmen are fairly attentive.

20) *The Golden Mug Inn* (I/3)—This inn is the usual staying place of adventurers in Narrion, so the inn's bar is a good spot to check for tales. Food and drink are both good and cheap, room and board is five silvers per night. The barmaids are both beautiful and willing, and the inn is always looking to hire new barmaids who meet the requirements. (It is sometimes rumored that these girls mysteriously disappear, though the Inn claims that they have merely left town. This is generally accepted as the truth, since the girls are known to be rather free with their favors.)

The Innkeeper is a ruddy-complexioned fat man by the name of Cobbisan Ssa. He is very tight-lipped and nervous, and he sweats at the least provocation or physical action. But his nervous fear is well founded, for he is a thrall of the Stalker/Oracle. There is a secret passage from the Oracle's Temple Pit which has an exit in the deepest part of the Inn's wine cellar. This is one way that the creature can enter the town undetected. Cobbisan lets the creature through a secret door, and it then either moves into the town proper or stalks through the secret passages which lead to several of the inn's rooms. (The passages lead from the cellar.) The Oracle pays Cobbisan well for his services (which is why the man can afford to run the inn so cheaply), but the bartender lives in constant fear of being found out by other people. This makes him very paranoid and nervous and he has, upon occasion, done

in a guest who asked too many questions or appeared to know too much.

21) *Smith* (SH/1)—The Smith is a tall, dark man. His prices are good and he treats his customers fairly—but woe to any who cross him. Treat him as a 4th-level Fighter with 18/29 Strength.

22) (U/2)

23) (MF/3)

24) *Bookstore* (SH/2)—This strange little shop-house is run by an eccentric old sage whose sight and hearing are both deteriorating; he is therefore sometimes very hard to deal with. The shop occasionally has rare books, tomes and scrolls which he will part with for a very reasonable price. An occasional magic book will pop up also.

25) (S/2)

26) (S/2)

27) *The "Haunted House"* (U/2)—In the cellar of this dilapidated old house is a secret door which is the Oracle's second method of secretly entering Narrion, though it connects with the same passage that runs from the Golden Mug Inn. It is the Oracle's occasional prowling through this house that has led to the rumor that the old manse is haunted. Though most people claim they don't believe the place is haunted, everyone avoids it like the plague.

28) (S/2)

29) (S/3)

30) (S/2)

31) (S/3)

32) (S/3)

33) (S/2)

34) (MF/3)

35) *The Green Dragon Tavern* (SH/2)—A good number of adventurers can be found frequenting this tavern, as well as most of the more boisterous locals, so this is a very good spot to pick up information. The barkeep is a jolly, middleaged gent who lives above the tavern with his good-natured wife (fairly pretty for her



age) and his two small children, a boy and a girl. Holliman (the barkeep) is well known as a magnificent story teller and is very knowledgeable on many subjects, knowledge that he will gladly share with anyone asking him and offering a generous tip. With his jovial good humor and quick wit he usually manages to keep the crowd under control. He usually assumes the forefront concerning matters which affect the whole town.

36) (MF/2)

37) (MF/2)

38) (F/2)

39) (F/1)—In this slightly rundown house lives Bornn, the Fighter. He is getting on in years and is neither as strong nor as quick as he used to be, though his wits are still as sharp as ever. He is a conservative fellow by nature, and nearly a recluse. He has not gone adventuring since he was converted to belief in the Church of Apathy through an unfortunate set of circumstances involving his late wife a number of years ago. He is, for all intents and purposes, retired. But if he thought the cause were great enough, he could be stirred to action. He is a seventh-level Fighter. On his living-room wall hangs his mighty sword Rangorn, which is a +1 Lawful Good sword with Int 12, Ego 7 and three remaining wishes. It speaks only lawful good and common, though it can communicate telepathically. It has the following powers: 1) Cure Serious Wounds, 2) X-Ray Vision, 3) +2 Str and 4) Detect Evil and Good.

40) (F/2)—This modest house is the home of Bornn's daughter, Gay, and her three-year-old son, Jon. She is a very beautiful, blonde-tressed young woman with a pleasing figure and flashing green eyes. She is often somber-faced, but has a bright, warm smile and a lilting laugh when she chooses to display them. Since her husband was slain she has worked at the Green Dragon Tavern as a singer and a dancer. She is as protective of her father as he is of her.

41) (Bk/2)—Barracks housing about 50 lazy and apathetic soldiers.

42) *The General Store* (SH/2)—An average general store run by a chubby, middle-aged woman (Gloria Simins) and her two beautiful teen-age daughters, Lena, the eldest, and Marci. The three of them live above the store.

Other map symbols

E) *Watch Towers* manned by two men at all times.

F) *Gallows*

G) *Front Gate*

H) *Moor Gate*

RUMORS AND LEGENDS

These are the rumors that commonly float around the town of Narrion. If characters are just asking around, allow about an 80% chance that they will get a false or trivial bit of information, unless the source is reliable or has a reaction of 10 or above toward the characters. Keep in mind also that most people wouldn't know too many unusual things (that had any truth at all to them).

In no case should rumors approach the truth more than the rumors given in the outlines, without very good reason.

Rumors not already detailed elsewhere in the text will be given hereafter.

Roll a 12-sided die:

1) The Witch Ilsa

2) The "Haunted House"

3) The Golden Mug Inn

4) The Bookstore

5) The Hills of the Jarkung

6) The Oracle (perhaps a recent prophecy)

7) The Loch Lakan Monster

8) The Moor

9) The Stalker

10) The Lurkers in Shadow (Troglydites) and their underworld realm

11) Misc. Wilderness rumor

12) Bornn, the fighter (his family, his history, and his conversion to the Faith of the Temple of Apathy)



THE LEGEND OF BORNN

Following is a brief outline of what one might hear concerning the life of Bornn, the fighter. It is a general guide only; there is no one who would tell it exactly this way. Here are the facts:

1) Both Bornn and his daughter live in relative seclusion in separate houses at the edge of town. It has been thus since Bornn was converted to the faith of Apathy years ago.

2) In the beginning Bornn had been very active in the town defense and had even pitted his sword against the Stalker and wounded the beast, though it escaped.

3) One night as he sat at home with his wife Elaine, he heard a scream of terror. Kissing her farewell, he rushed into the square to see a dark shadow grappling with a villager.

4) Bornn swung his sword and hit the shadow a mighty blow. It fell to the ground, and in the moonlight Bornn could see that this was not the Stalker but the reptile-like form of one of the Lurkers in Shadow.

5) Then he heard his wife scream. Breaking down his own door, he rushed into his living room and saw a hulking shadow-thing hunching over the dead body of his wife. He charged the monster with a blood-curdling scream and smote the monster's flesh and bone with such force that the blow carried Bornn to the floor. The monster just laughed.

6) In his dazed stupor, Bornn swore that he saw the monster dissolve into the shadows and disappear from the house.

7) From then on, he has led the life of a recluse, even refusing the company of his daughter Gay and her husband. The total randomness and meaninglessness of his wife's murder convinced him that all the good that one can do in the world is for naught, so one might as well be apathetic. Thus, he was converted to the religion of Apathy. He still refused Gay's requests that he move in with her and her husband because of the pride which lingers in him to this day.

8) It was only a short time later that Gay's husband, while enlisted in the King's Army as a mercenary soldier, was killed in a battle with the Jarkung. But Gay had pride like her father's and would not consider moving in with him, not even when her son was born a few months later, though they see each other fairly often.

ANGRY VILLAGERS (village reactions)

This table is to be used if the Oracle is killed, or it can be used for just about anything if you ignore the parts of the paragraphs that obviously only apply to the death of the Oracle. With that preface, the following are the possible reactions for the people of Narrion (adding or subtracting from the dice roll for charisma bonuses or penalties of the offender):

Roll 2 6-sided dice:

2-3 = **ANGRY** —The town is extremely upset at the death of their Oracle; they don't seem to care that he was a monster, they would gladly sacrifice a few lives for the gift of prophecy. They may not even believe that he was a monster; after all, there's no body. How do they know that you haven't just done away with their prophet? And besides, can you imagine what this will do to their tourist industry? Character is lynched without trial.

4-5 = **CONVICTED** —Character is tried and convicted of harming the town or a resident of the town and either hung, stoned, or otherwise subjected to the eye-for-an-eye justice system.

6-7 = **HOSTILE** —Tried, but the people can't seem to make up their minds on guilt and finally decide to exile the offender from the town, maybe even with some supplies.

8-10 = **ACQUITTED** —Tried and let off, but the people probably aren't terribly pleased and will request that the offender leave town.

11-12 = **JUBILANT** —The townspeople are overjoyed that they have been released from the curse on their village. They raise the slayer on their shoulders, parade him through the town and give him the keys to the city and a night on the town. If the roll plus bonuses for reaction is over 13, the people will beg him to stay and give him a house and a cushy job and his pick of the unmarried women of the town, etc. (Now, if only you'd do something about that Lake monster, and those Lurkers . . .)

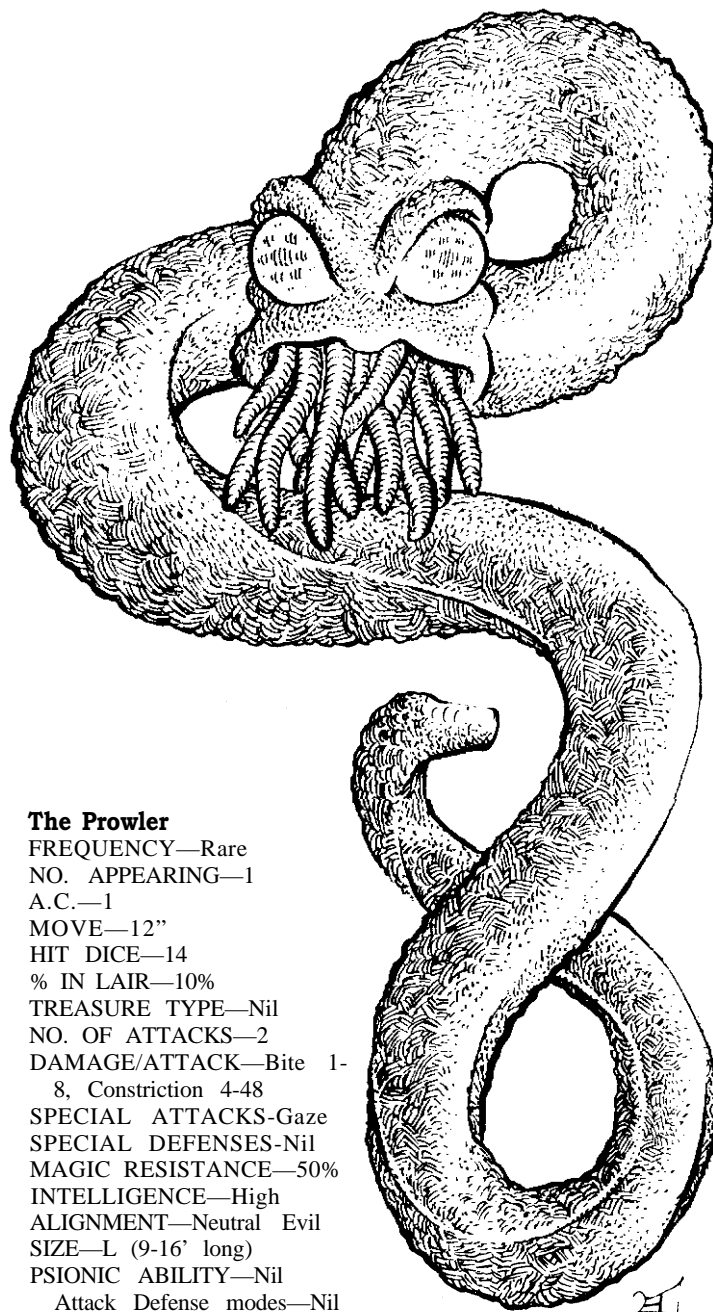
Note that these reactions do not apply until it is discovered that the Oracle is missing or until some idiot spreads the news around.

WANDERING MONSTERS

Common (65%)	Uncommon (20%)	Rare (11%)	Very Rare (4%)
1) Skeletons	Trolls	Ghosts	Night Hag
2) Skeletons	Trolls	Xorn	Mind Flayer
3) Skeletons	Cerebral Parasite	Roper	Vampire
4) Skeletons	Basilisks	Xorn	
5) Troglodytes	Medusa	Ghosts	
6) Troglodytes	Mimic	Ghosts	
7) Troglodytes	Gargoyles		
8) Centipedes	Black Pudding		
9) Centipedes	Grey Ooze		
10) Gas Spores	Prowler		
11) Gas Spores	Prowler		
12) Giant Spiders	Trolls		
13) Giant Spiders			
14) Stirges			
15) Stirges			
16) Stirges			
17) Centipedes			
18) Troglodytes			
19) Skeletons			
20) Skeletons			

Skeletons —Skeletons found in the service of the Oracle are of the normal type, with the exception that they all have 16 hit points, more than twice the normal maximum. Other than this one discrepancy, the monsters named above are all as they appear in the Monster Manual, or as listed elsewhere in this module.

Frequency for monsters in the Pit of the Oracle supercedes anything written elsewhere.

**The Prowler**

FREQUENCY—Rare

NO. APPEARING—1

A.C.—1

MOVE—12"

HIT DICE—14

% IN LAIR—10%

TREASURE TYPE—Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS—2

DAMAGE/ATTACK—Bite 1-8, Constriction 4-48

SPECIAL ATTACKS—Gaze

SPECIAL DEFENSES—Nil

MAGIC RESISTANCE—50%

INTELLIGENCE—High

ALIGNMENT—Neutral Evil

SIZE—L (9-16' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY—Nil

Attack Defense modes—Nil

When looking into the eyes of the Prowler it is necessary to make a save vs. magic or the victim will be irrevocably mind blanked, becoming a Zombie under the control of the Prowler. (Those who make the save, the Prowler will attempt to crush within its powerful coils.) The Zombie(s) then become the recipient of the monster's eggs, which she carefully injects underneath the skin of the victims with the brown tentacles that line her mouth. No matter how tenderly she does this, however, the victim still takes 1-8 points of damage. The Zombies are then turned loose to wander about aimlessly for 2-8 days until the eggs hatch and disclose their wriggling contents, cute little baby Prowlers. The Zombie now becomes their first meal; he lies down quietly as the little devils pick his bones clean.

Some exceptionally intelligent Prowlers have been known to form hatcheries. They charm large numbers of people and use them as guards and hosts for their eggs. These hatching grounds will usually be found in abandoned caves or underground.

To restore the minds of the Zombies, it is necessary to acquire the services of 3 High Priests (9th-level Clerics or higher), who simultaneously cast *Dispel Evil* spells upon the Zombie, who then regains control of his mind.

The Jarkung

FREQUENCY—Rare
NO. APPEARING—1-6 or 2-12 in lair
A.C.—3
MOVE—9"
HIT DICE—5
% IN LAIR—15%
TREASURE—Type A, gems, jewelry, and maps/magic only
NO. OF ATTACKS—1 tail, 1 or 2 weapons
DAMAGE/ATTACK—2-12, or by weapon type

SPECIAL ATTACKS—Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES—Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE—20%
INTELLIGENCE—High
ALIGNMENT—Neutral Evil (with some Lawful tendencies)
SIZE—L (7' tall standing, 14' overall length)
PSIONIC ABILITY—Nil*
 Attack Defense modes—Nil*
 *May be present in older individuals

These creatures have a long tail with a mace-like growth at the end, small horns, and come in a variety of colors in odd designs. They can see well in darkness as well as light, and are fairly intelligent, though lacking in Wisdom. Their strength is great, and they can hurl rocks as a Hill Giant, doing 2-16 points of damage. However, their snake-like form enables them to attack creatures much smaller than themselves with none of the penalties that Giants incur. When in close combat they prefer to strike with two weapons at once while using the snake-like lower portion of their bodies to move about quickly, bewildering and often tripping their opponents (as well as striking with their mace-like tail).

No one knows how long Jarkung live, or even if they die naturally or how they reproduce (though it is rumored that the tail may serve as an egg case when needed), for no young have ever been seen. It is a known fact that Jarkung use ESP, and it is rumored that the older ones can use Psionic powers.

Note—Both the Jarkung (TD-14) and the Prowler (TD-7) originally appeared in issues of *The Dragon*. They are represented here more or less as they originally appeared, with some interpretations where the original text was lacking the detail necessary for inclusion in the *Monster Manual* format.

Elemental Demons (Gremlins)

FREQUENCY—Very Rare
NO. APPEARING—1-10
A.C.—6
MOVE—6"/15"
HIT DICE—3
% IN LAIR—95%
TREASURE TYPE—B treasure but A maps/magic
NO. OF ATTACKS—4
DAMAGE/ATTACK—1-4/1-4 (Claws)/1-6 (Bite) + Tail (special)
SPECIAL ATTACKS—Tail 2-12/electricity/also see below
SPECIAL DEFENSES—See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE—50% also see below
INTELLIGENCE—Low
ALIGNMENT—Neutral Evil (with some Chaotic tendencies)
SIZE—S (up to 18" high)
PSIONIC ABILITY—Psionically aware but no powers
 Attack/Defense modes—Nil



These impish creatures are the conjured servants of the Super-Planes (such as Hell and the Abyss). They are summoned to perform myriad deeds that are not important enough to spare a greater servant for, such as fetching the master's slippers. They are seldom found on the Material plane, though they freely roam the Astral and Ethereal planes, carrying messages for their powerful masters.

They are formed from the embodiment of the spirit of one of the four elements and cannot be harmed by anything originating from that element. Thus, Earth Demons cannot be harmed by things made of stone, Air Demons are not affected by whirlwinds and such, Fire Demons are not affected by brandished flame or boiling oil, and Water Demons can stand in the midst of the mightiest tsunami. Similarly, they are each affected by no magic involving their element. They attack and save as 7-die monsters, and as noted above are at least 50% magic-resistant in any case. If one is killed, it simply becomes broken down to its elemental component.

Though they will follow the orders of any powerful being summoning them, Gremlins tend to be very mischievous and chaotic in their dealings.

They speak common, neutral, lawful, and chaotic as well as their own Gremlin tongue.

They can become invisible and teleport at will and are very fond of being small nuisances to players, just for fun. If a player encounters an otherwise unengaged Gremlin, the little pest will often turn invisible and follow the character(s) around for the sole purpose of playing pranks. Gremlins may actually be responsible for all sorts of minor annoyances.

If they are encountered in large groups, there is one further bother that Gremlins can provide. A group of 6 or more can once a day perform, in conjunction with one another, a totally random M-U spell of any level. This is a totally random conjuration and cannot be controlled to any extent. If the character is lucky, the Gremlins may even be caught in their own spell (perhaps, for example, be caught in their own *Teleport* and be unable to find the party again), especially if the intended victim makes his saving throw.

The Oracle (aka The Stalker)

FREQUENCY—Very Rare
NO. APPEARING—1
A.C.—4
MOVE—9"
HIT DICE—14; 76 Hit Points
% IN LAIR—95%
TREASURE TYPE—See Map C, The Pit of the Oracle, Level 2, Rm. #10
NO. OF ATTACKS—3 (5) Mouth, hands (feet)
DAMAGE/ATTACK—6-36/1-8/1-8(1-6/1-6)
SPECIAL ATTACKS—Hug, +2-20

SPECIAL DEFENSES—See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE—Immune to Charms, Geas, etc. (also see below)
INTELLIGENCE—Average, but exceedingly cunning
ALIGNMENT—Neutral Evil
SIZE—L (8' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY—Nil
 Attack/Defense modes—None, but cannot be attacked

This creature, which lives in the Pit of the Oracle near the small town of Narrion, is famous for its predictions, especially those concerning Narrion's dread Stalker. Its predictions concerning the Stalker are very accurate with good reason, for the Oracle, which the people of the town assume to be an aged prophet, is in actuality the grotesque Stalker itself, who delights in playing this cat-and-mouse game with the simple villagers.

As well as being crafty, the creature has a number of powers which help it perpetrate its Oracle disguise (as well as being extremely useful all around). They are ESP, Clairvoyance, Clairaudience and Precognition (which its animal fears prevent it from using to foresee its own eventual demise).

As the Oracle, the monster speaks in a low, strained whisper (most often in riddles, this being part of its game, though it will occasionally speak plainly, but cryptically, just to be perverse), in either neutral or common. The ability to speak cryptically and in riddles does not stem from intelligence, however; rather, it stems



from a natural craftiness and cunning that the creature has been gifted with.

Besides its Oracle abilities, the Stalker has a number of other special abilities. It can Walk Ethereally twice per day (which is very useful in raiding the town).

The second set of eyes which rest high upon its brow render it immune to turning to stone, and life-trapping spells and abilities, by causing these powers to reflect upon the wielder.

It can see extremely well in complete darkness (up to 120') but shuns the sunlight, and will usually not venture out into the sun.

But by far its most important advantage over mere mortals is that long ago, its heart and soul were removed from its body by some arcane process and placed in a black gem, which resides in a glass case in its unholy lair. (Map C, The Pit, level 2, room #2) This process has made it impossible to kill the creature while its heart is undisturbed, for it regenerates at a rate of 5 hit points per melee round. For all practical purposes, this makes the beast impervious to any attack the villagers might mount against the Stalker.

If the Soul-Gem is shattered, the monster will still continue to live for 2-12 melee rounds, after which it will die and crumble to dust in short order.

THE PIT

The Pit of the Oracle was torn out of the heart of the stone many years ago by the Dark Lord's eldritch magicks when the land was young. He equipped it well with traps and treasure and a special array of monsters. The magic processes that created the Pit also rendered it immune to certain forms of attack that might assault it. (This applies only to non movable features such as doors, walls, etc.) The Pit is immune to fire, water, earthquakes, and wind-based attacks as well as electricity and disintegration.

Encounters are checked for as in a normal dungeon but using the special Pit of the Oracle Wandering Monsters chart.

Level One and the Stone (Map B)

THE STONE

The ancient, hollowed-out Stone of the Oracle sits on the top of the Mound of the Oracle (A on Map A).

In the middle of the cave is a five-foot diameter hole (marked A on Map B) which descends deep into the Pit and down which seekers call their questions to the mysterious Oracle. If one were to descend through the hole, one would find oneself in the Hall of the Idols, and if one continued the path would lead to the Great Hall below.

KEY TO ROOM DESCRIPTIONS

The general features of each room or section of The Pit of the Oracle's two underground levels are listed in a code which is defined below.

Each room's number is followed by the room's name or a special description, if any, of that numbered section of the map. Unnamed rooms are represented by ---.

Next is the letter A, B, or C, describing the lighting in the area. **A = no light source; B = dim light, usually coming from a source outside the immediate area; C = normal natural light, as if from firelight.**

Next is the word "**Shielded**" or "**Non-shielded.**" A shielded area is one which is lead-lined to prevent the use of ESP or any sort of X-ray vision to view its contents. The word "**(Shielded)**" in parentheses means that the area is lead-lined, usually to prevent detection of some other shielded area, but has easy methods of entry which may make the shielding ineffectual.

Next is a description of the features of the door(s) enclosing the area, if any:

Door type is either **W = wooden; WB = wooden, banded with metal; S = stone; or M = metal.**

Handles or protrusions, if any, are indicated by **K = knob; L = latch; N = none.**

Locks or devices to prevent entry are described as either **H = hidden latch; LK = locked; ML = magical lock; or U = unlocked.** If locked the letter or letters describing the lock are followed by a small letter **i = locked on the inside of the room** or area the door encloses, **o = locked on the outside of the room** or area; or **b = locked on both sides.**

If there is more than one door enclosing an area, each is designated by the direction in which it opens (North South East or West) and the number of the room or area into which it opens.

MAP B LEVEL ONE AND THE STONE

Room 1)---/A/Non-shielded; Door-None.

2)---/A/Non-shielded; Door-None.

3)/Spider room/A/Nonshielded; Door-None. This room is filled with webs in which live 6 Giant Spiders, 16 20 12 30 28 19 HTK.

4)/Weapons room/A/Non shielded; Door-None. Trap-spiked sheet, 2-24, falling from ceiling on characters within 2 dotted lines S1 = war hammer; S2 = long sword, P = chain mail (all hung on wall).

5)/The Room of Mirrors/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. Every available surface in this room is covered with unbreakable, indullable mirrors, including the floor and ceiling.

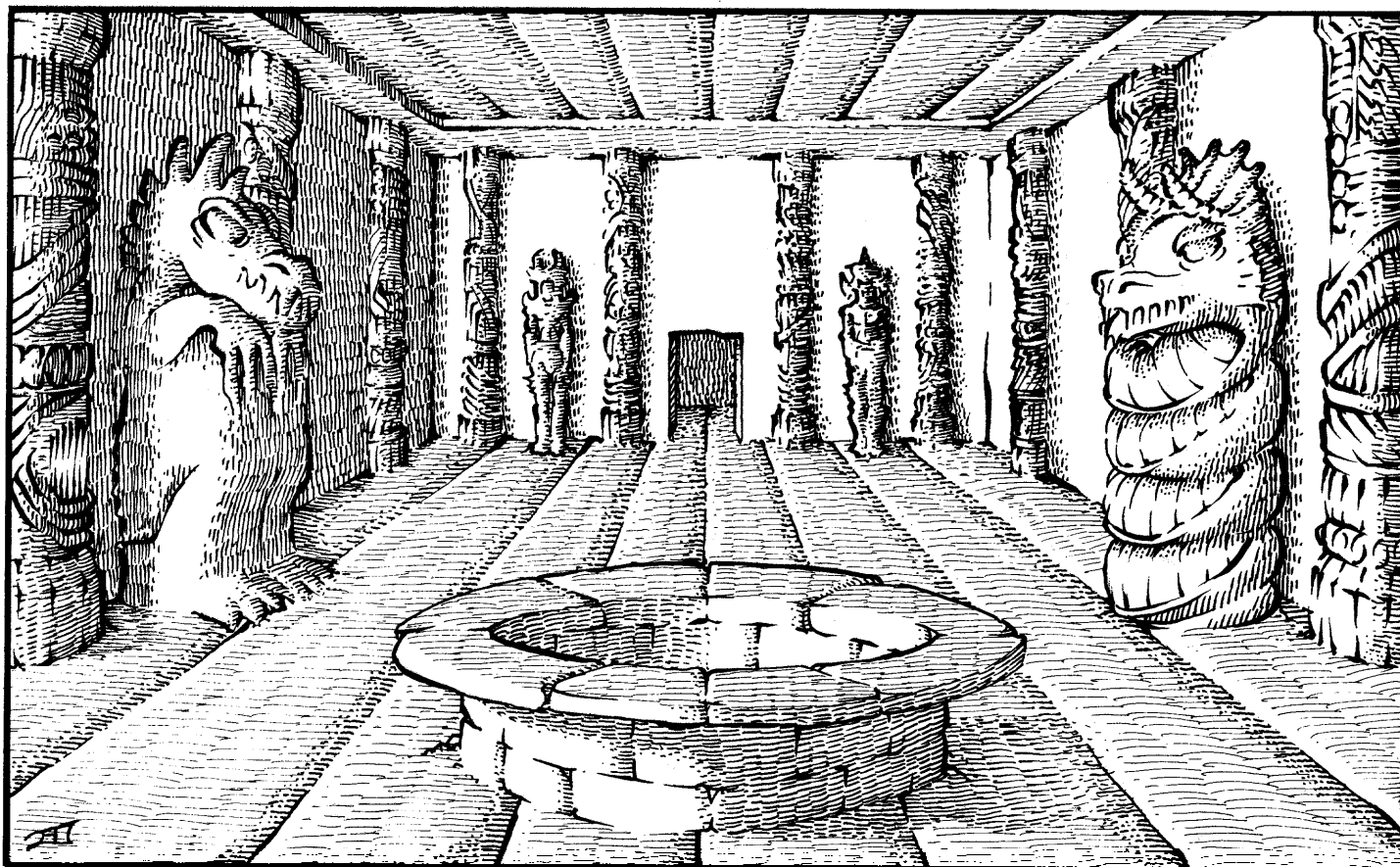
6)---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. Vases 1 & 2 filled with water (for washbasin).

7)---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

8)---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

9)/Shield room/A/Non-shielded; Door-None. P1 & 2 = steel shields.

10)/Final Hieroglyph Room/C/Non-shielded; Door-None. Within this room can be found the final series of pictographs depicting the history of the Oracle. The walls can be read as follows: The



Dark Lord creates the Pit with mighty spells; He calls his evil minions from all over the world and chooses which of them will inhabit the pit; He grants his minion the Oracle (toad thing) dominion over all the lesser nasties, gives it the gift of the "third-eye," and in an unholy rite removes the monster's heart and soul from its body. A = a jackal-faced idol with a small, lidded vase in its hands. This vase contains 1 dose of a Potion of Longevity which renews itself every 4 hours. However, the vase cannot be removed and is too small to stick more than 3 fingers into. To make matters worse, the potion level is low enough that it cannot be lapped up, and the statue is too heavy (part of the bedrock, actually), to be moved. Woe to anyone who harms the idol, for harming it will summon the Oracle, or, if it's dead, the other minions of the Dark Lord.

11)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

12)/The Hall of the Idols/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. In the middle of this many-columned room is a well which leads from A in the Stone to A in the Great Hall (rm. 19/level 2) below. The pit is exactly above the four dots in the well. Statues B & C are human fighting men; B has one part of an *Amulet of the Planes*, a sun-like medallion with a threaded center, around its neck; C has a stone carving of what the whole should look like around its neck. D & E are stylized dragons, and the iris of the right eye of D (which screws out) is a dial with 24 markings which controls the plane traveled to (as the alternative amulet in the *DMG*). This is the second part of the amulet. F & G are statues of hippo-headed river gods; the right eye of G screws out to become the third part of the amulet, an eye-shaped centerpiece, the pupil of which acts as the socket for the fourth and final piece of the amulet, the pointer. Around the necks of fighter statues H & I are carved stone medallions; in the center of each is a small, plain pointer. The pointer of I can be turned easily and removed at will, but if the pointer of H is turned or molested in any way, anyone touching the statue will receive 2-12 points of electrical damage. The removable pointer from the medallion around the neck of human fighter statue I snaps very nicely into the pupil of the eye from statue G, completing the *Amulet of the Planes*. The pointer determines which of the planes will be traveled to. (Note that if either

parts D or G are not screwed in tightly, the transportation will not be predictable, for the synchronization will be off.)

13)/Water Fountain/A/Shielded; Door-(M/L/U). A is an ornate stone fountain which is perpetually flowing. In it live 3 Water Weirds with 20/15/12 hits to disrupt.

14)/Second Hieroglyph Room/C/Non-shielded; Door-None. Within this room and the corridor connecting it with room 10 can be seen the middle series of pictographs concerning the history of the Oracle. The walls can be read as follows: The Dark Lord descends on the castle of Narrion in a fiery blaze. He kills the local Druid with a flick of his hand and shrivels the great western forest. He then spawns the dark wood to the south of the castle and fills it with fell creatures. In the lake called Lakan he places the dreaded monster which drives the poor fishers from its foamy shores. Then he turns to his true objective, his enemies in Narrion Castle, the lord and his wizard sister. Long their battle raged through the castle, and the simple villagers fled to the plains far north, in the shelter of the castle of the wizard Elohir (ill-fated creator of the Jarkung) while the battle blazed for many a day. Finally, the Dark Lord threw down the mighty lord from the very parapet of Castle Narrion. The lord's wizard sister was enraged, but was no match for the Dark Lord. When the mighty battle was finished not a stone remained of the castle, and the only living thing left in the battleground was the Dark Lord. Having accomplished his main objective, he then brought to the land his general, the Stalker, to spread evil and terrorize the poor people of Narrion, whom he drove back to the barren land that was once their home by causing a foul quagmire swampland to spring up and engulf the north plains. The frightened villagers then erected the small town of Narrion on the ground where the castle had once stood.

15)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. S = footman's mace; P = large shield; both are hung on the wall. Note also the *Mirror of Life Trapping* behind the curtains on the wall.

16)/Hall of Tapestries/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

17)/---/A/Non-shielded; Doors-S to 18 (WB/L/H i), E to 19 (S/N/H b). Perched above the corridor entrance to this room from room 16 is a 46 hit-point Green Slime.

18)/The Stair to the Bottom of the Lake/A/Shielded; Door-(WB/L/H o). This door is impassable from the inside and will slam shut behind characters, trapping them inside. The stairs lead 10' down to a blank 5'-by-5'-by-10' stone landing. Once all the characters in the room have descended to the platform, the bottom literally falls out and they find themselves falling through a black void. After a time the fall ends, and they find themselves thrust into the icy water 200' below the surface of Loch Lakan at point D on Map A. (Remember to check for the monster).

19)/Stairs Down to Level 2/A/Shielded; Doors-(both) (S/N/H b). This hidden stairway goes to level 2, #29 and is the same stairway as room #24, level 2.

20)/The Beginning, History Room/C/Non-shielded; Door- (S/N/H b). On the walls of this room can be seen the first in the series of pictographs concerning the life of the Oracle/Stalker. The first pictures on either wall are bas-reliefs of a man in a long, flowing, floor-length robe with a face-covering, horned helmet through which only two evil, orbless eyes can be seen. This is the Dark Lord. The first series of pictures shows the Dark Lord sitting on his iron throne, thinking of dark, vile schemes. He creates (mutates) the hideous toad-like Stalker and sends the creature to lead one of his many armies. While this war was being conducted in far-off lands, a powerful lord and mighty wizardess had the audacity to direct their army against the very stronghold of the Dark Lord himself. At first their attack was fairly effective, but then the Dark Lord drew in his mighty right arm and the army of the Stalker and crushed the rebellious upstarts. The lord and his sister the wizardess, their army devastated, fled to their ancestral castle near the shore of Loch Lakan. The second series of pictures appears in room 14. Note that these pictographs will not be understood by most people, requiring quite a bit of intelligence to decipher them as they are given here.

21)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-(W/L/ML i). V1 = water; V2 = 10 doses, love potion, treat as *Philter of Love*.

22)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-None. V1 = water; V2 = unholy water; V3 = acid.

23)/Arms Room/C/Non-shielded; Door-None. 2 spears, S1 & S2, crossed over a Shield of Vulnerability -2 which is emblazoned with the indullable Red-Eye, symbol of the Dark Lord.

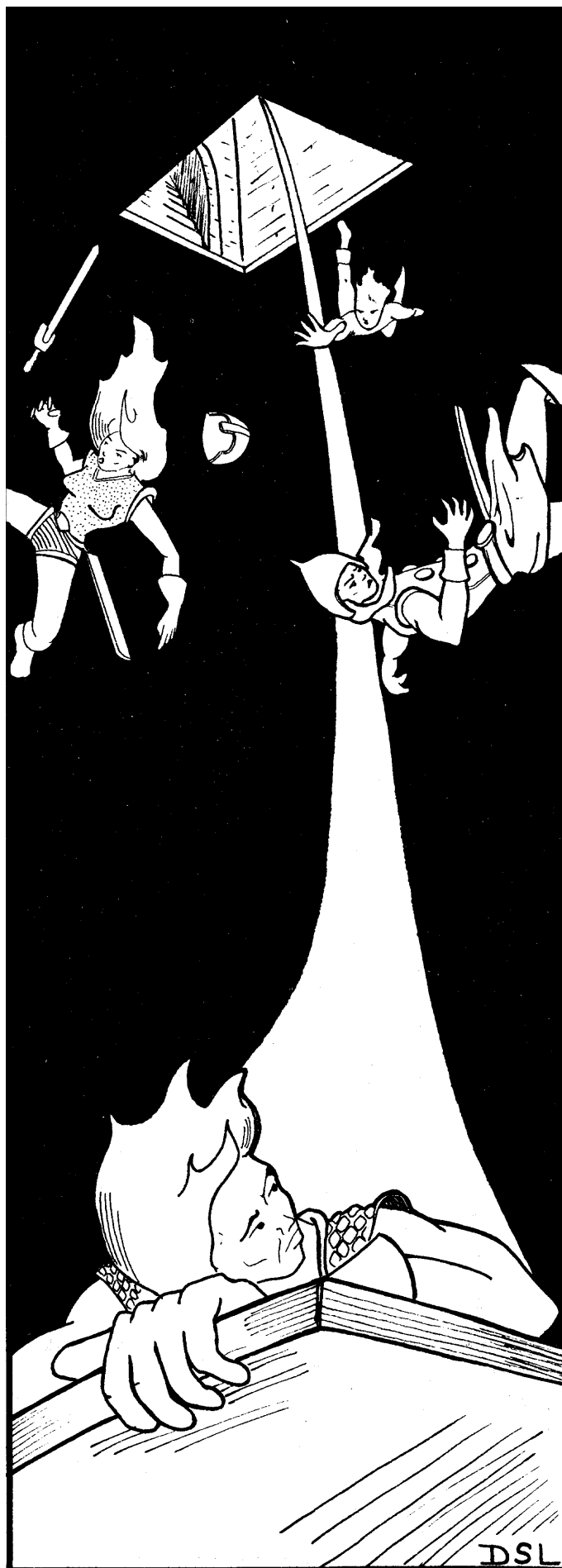
24)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

25)/The Chamber of the Columns/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

26)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-(WB/K/LK i). A = hollow column filled with 2000 cp, 1000 sp, 4000 ep, with a *Scarab of Death* at the bottom of the pile. However, 3 feet off the floor, hovering just above the treasure pile, is a jet black *Sphere of Annihilation*. Note that all the walls in the Pit have been magically rendered immune to disintegration, and thus are immune to the sphere, even though the sphere is more powerful than the spell. Note also that the Oracle and his heart are likewise immune to this particular item.

27)/The Room of the Dead/A/Shielded; Door-(WB/K/LK o). A, B, C, & D are the coffins of the four Vampires which inhabit this room. A = female vampire, 24 hit points; B = female vampire, 56 hit points; C = male vampire, 65 hit points; D = female vampire, 37 hit points.

28)/Wandering Monster Materialization Room/C/Shielded; Door-(W/K/U). The unearthly light in this room emanates from the swirling dimensional rift which is in the place of the room's east wall. Once every turn, a random monster from the Pit table will step out of the shimmering whirlpool and into the room. The monster can either then leave through the rift or leave by the door and wander through the pit to return at some later time (so characters may run into returning monsters, also). However, if there are characters in the room, chances are that the monster will want to fight them. Characters below fourth level cannot pass through the rift unless pulled through by someone else who can pass through. If characters do pass through the barrier, the plane they come out on is determined at random (with preference to the Negative Material and other evil or dark planes), or send them somewhere else on earth (with preference to the Narrion area, such as points B or C on Map A), or into some future or past time. A *Phase Door* spell will cause the



portal to collapse into itself for one turn; all other attacks are ineffective.

29)/Stairs down to level 2/A/Non-shielded; Door-None. Goes down to level 2, rm #36.

Map C The Pit of the Oracle—Level Two

1)/Secret Passage to Narrion/A/Shielded; Door-(S/N/H b). This secret passage, marked A1 on Map A, goes from the Pit of the Oracle to buildings #20 (The Golden Mug Inn) and #27 (Haunted House) on Map A, Narrion Detail.

2)/The Hall of the Throne/C/(Shielded); Doors-N to 1 (S/N/H b), W to 5 (S/N/U). This is the room where the Heart of the Oracle, a black, oily gem, rests in a glass case upon a pedestal guarded by the most fearsome of creatures. The pedestal and Heart are indicated by "A." B1 and B2 are two super-powerful Type VI Demons, each with 80 hit points. These monsters will stand stone-still (and even appear to be statues to the unobservant) unless there is someone behind line C who should not be there, in which case they will immediately attack the intruder. Line C is also the point beyond which Dragon D may not move the bulk of its body (because of magical enchantment). Dragon D appears to be made of tarnished yellow metal of some type, but this is only a side effect of the mighty enchantments which the Dark Lord used on the creature when he first placed it in the Pit. Though its size and color have been changed, the creature is actually an ancient Red Dragon. Although its high intelligence has been muted by the magic long ago performed on it, so that it can neither talk nor employ spells, it gained several powerful and extraordinary powers in the process. The first is immunity to any mind related attacks, such as ESP and psionics. The second, and by far more terrible, of its abilities is a breath weapon which it can employ once every fifth melee round! It has 88 hit points.

KEY TO ROOM DESCRIPTIONS

The general features of each room or section of The Pit of the Oracle's two underground levels are listed in a code which is defined below.

Each room's number is followed by the room's name or a special description, if any, of that numbered section of the map. Unnamed rooms are represented by ---.

Next is the letter A, B, or C, describing the lighting in the area. **A = no light source; B = dim light, usually coming from a source outside the immediate area; C = normal natural light, as if from firelight.**

Next is the word "Shielded" or "Non-shielded." A shielded area is one which is lead-lined to prevent the use of ESP or any sort of X-ray vision to view its contents. The word "(Shielded)" in parentheses means that the area is lead-lined, usually to prevent detection of some other shielded area, but has easy methods of entry which may make the shielding ineffectual.

Next is a description of the features of the door(s) enclosing the area, if any:

Door type is either **W = wooden; WB = wooden, band-ed with metal; S = stone; or M = metal.**

Handles or protrusions, if any, are indicated by **K = knob; L = latch; N = none.**

Locks or devices to prevent entry are described as either **H = hidden latch; LK = locked; ML = magical lock; or U = unlocked.** If locked, the letter or letters describing the lock are followed by a small letter **i = locked on the inside of the room** or area the door encloses, **o = locked on the outside of the room** or area; or **b = locked on both sides.**

If there is more than one door enclosing an area, each is designated by the direction in which it opens (North, South, East, or West) and the number of the room or area into which it opens.

3)/The Room of the Serpent/A/(Shielded); Door-entrance A, blocked by large *Mirror of Life Trapping* in room #9; if mirror is removed, entrance is opened. In this room resides a great Spirit Naga who will attack anyone removing the mirror which blocks the entrance to this room. It has 63 hit points.

4)/The Room of the Fire Pit/C/Non-shielded; Door-(S/N/H b). This room contains a blood-stained altar (A) upon which the Oracle occasionally dines, and the great sacrificial Fire Pit (B) which can extend for great distances to either the core of the earth, the elemental plane of Fire, or the Citadel of the Dark Lord, at the option of the DM. If crossed, the Fire Pit does 2-12 points of damage; if it is wandered into, the victim takes 6d6 damage per round.

5)/Corridor/A/Shielded; Doors-E to 2 (S/N/U); E to 21 (S/N/H o). This corridor has pit X, which opens under anyone crossing over it. It has a snap-shut lid, is 20' deep and filled with spikes. Fall & spikes do 2-24 total damage.

6)/Bubble Room/A/Shielded; Door-(S/N/H i). This room is filled with bubbles which will float into room 7 and chase characters when the door to the room is opened. The bubbles do 1-10 d6 of damage in a 5' diameter and explode on contact with anything. In the center of the Bubble Room floats a great bubble twice the diameter of the others (2 feet), and in the center of this floats a 40,000 gp diamond. This bubble does 12d6 of damage when burst. There are 40 bubbles in the room, not counting the great bubble.

7)/The Room of Bubbly Death/C/Shielded; Door-(S/N/unopen-able i). When this room is entered the door to room 6 opens to let the bubbles within float out. The door will remain open until all characters in front of the portcullis in room 17 are either dead or fled, or all the bubbles have been exploded, including the great bubble. If either of these circumstances are fulfilled the door will snap shut (possibly trapping characters if the great bubble has been burst). Bubbles will pursue characters to the first portcullis, carefully avoiding the crossbow trap in corridor 17.

8)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

9)/---/B/(Shielded); Door-None. *Mirror of Life Trapping* is 6' high and blocking the entrance to room 3. V1 & 2 = Water.

10)/The Hall of Treasure/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. This treasure-filled room is where the Oracle most often rests, languishing in his immense treasure pile. V1 = empty; V2 = poison, V3 = water; V4 = Potion of Diminution. Suggested treasure-15 swords including 3, +1; 1, +2; and 1, +3; 39 misc. weapons including 17 +1 arrows, 1 Hammer of Thunderbolts; 4 potions; 5 scrolls; 20 rings including 1 elemental command, 1 regeneration, 1 mammal control, 1 contrari-ness, and 2 delusion; 3 maps; 1 Staff of Power, 1 Rod of Lordly Might, 2 Snake Sticks, 1 Wand of Illusion, 1 Staff of Withering; 25 protective devices including 1 +1 armor, 2 +2 armor, 1 +3 armor, 2 +2 shields; 1 ebony fly, 1 manta ray cloak, 1 mirror of opposition, 1 lyre of building, 1 horn of blasting, 1 silver horn of Valhalla, 1 boots of levitation, one book of vile darkness, one copy of the Necromicon (Latin), 1 girdle of masculinity/femininity, 1 deck of many things, one magic carpet (hung on wall), and 1 crystal ball; 40,000 gp, 30,000 sp, 2000 ep, 1250 pp, 29,000 cp. Note that though the treasure is great the risks and obstacles are incredible. (Many specifics have been left to individual DM's. Note too that where items listed exceed the following information given, the remainder of the items are non-magical.)

11)/The Den Of the Oracle/C/Non-shielded; Door-None. Wash-basins 1, 2, 3, & 4 are of ordinary size and are filled with water; if emptied, they will magically fill again in one hour. The water is normal but each has slightly different minerals, so each type must be obtained in order to work the magic. W9 is an unusually large empty washbasin, which will hold 8 basinsfuls of water, preferably one each from W1, 2,3,4,5,6,7, & 8, located in this room and rooms 20 and 22. When the large basin is filled with liquid from the smaller basins, all that is needed to set its magic to work is a slight breath across the fluid's surface. This is the *Basin of All Things Past*, and by gazing at its surface one can see anything that has happened previous to the viewing time. This is how the Oracle can discover knowledge of things in the past, which are normally out of its power. Note that none of these basins will appear to have any great magic power if

sold. Once the viewing is over, the water loses its power and becomes only putrid water. A maximum viewing time of about five minutes should be allowed.

12)/---/A/Shielded; Door-(WB/K/U). This room contains 4 Xorn (56,47,38,43 HTK). The door of the room automatically opens if the Face (room 13) turns someone to stone.

13)/The Room of the Great Stone Face/C/Shielded Doors-E (WB/K/U), N to 12 (WB/K/U), S to 15 (WB/K/U). A is the "Great Stone Face," actually a 7' tall ceramic head. Anyone who looks into the eyes of the Face will be turned to stone (saving throw allowed). The stone that the characters are turned to is not ordinary stone, though; it is a combination of rare minerals which Xorn are particularly fond of. When a character is turned to stone by the Face, the north and south doors will automatically open and the Xorn that live in rooms 12 and 15 will come out to snack on the stone. One Xorn can eat one human-sized statue in 5 rounds. If somehow a statue is saved, remember that if the statue was damaged the person would also be damaged in the same way. The Face itself can take up to 4 hit points per round without being harmed, but 5 hits or more from any particular blow will cause it to shatter and release the horrible contents within: a mixed assortment of 27 Elemental Demons, each of whom has the maximum of 24 hit points. These little devils will act generally chaotically and whirl about the heads of the adventurers, which can make for real problems if the room is already full of hungry Xorn, and generally act in the manner which is prescribed for them in their description. The Xorn will return to their rooms when they run out of food, or if they're sorely pressed in battle.

14)/Treasure room/A/Shielded; Door-(S/N/H b). This room contains 1,000 gp, a *Robe of Eyes*, a *Poison Robe* and a *Ring of Shooting Stars*.

15)/---/A/Shielded; Doors-N to 13 (WB/K/U), S to 16 (WB/K/U). This room contains 4 Xorn (49,36,41,27). The door of the room automatically opens if the Face (room 13) turns someone to stone, releasing the Xorn.

16)/Bubble room/A/Shielded; Door-(WB/K/U). This room is occupied by 20 bubbles (as in room 6), but they do only 1-6 d6 of damage when they explode. The door does not open by itself, so characters must open it themselves so that the bubbles can follow them. These bubbles have no range limit and will follow characters literally anywhere.

17)/Maze of Doom/C/Shielded; Door-(S/N/H). T = crossbow bolt firing across the hall in the direction of the arrow to the opposite wall, triggered by stepping within 2½ feet of the arrow. It does 2-8 pts. of damage to anyone who gets in the way. This corridor is a passage maze with portcullises failing behind characters, trapping them.

18)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-(S/N/H).

19)/The Great Hall/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. A is the exit from the pit in the stone and the well in the Hall of the Idols above. The well is positioned exactly above the four dots on the floor.

20)/---/B/(Shielded); Door-(S/N/H b). W6 = holy water W7 = unholy water. Both liquids are meant to be added to the Basin of All Things Past, and the basins have the filling properties of the other basins in rooms 11 and 22.

21)/Illusion Room/B/(Shielded); Door-(S/N/H i). This room projects the illusion of being a corridor which continues out of sight, but it actually ends at the blank wall where indicated. This does not mean that characters will ever hit the wall; they may believe that they are walking while they are actually standing still. The portcullis shown comes down behind characters once they are in the room. They will see it, and may believe they are walking away from it, but if they turn around and walk back it will only be the actual distance away. The room is only intended to hold victims until the Oracle can "take care" of them. Naturally, if they discover the illusion and find the secret door, they may attempt to open it and escape.

22)/---/B/(Shielded); Door-None. V1 = water; V2 = Poison; W8 = The Basin of Death. The thin, red liquid in this basin is poisonous if imbibed, but if spilled is even more dangerous, for a single drop will spring up into a 16-hit-point Skeleton and instantly attack the spiller (perhaps causing more spilling). Allow 200 drops to

the basinful. The liquid will not mix with anything except the other 7 waters of the *Basin of All Things Past*. The Basin of Death has the same filling properties as the other 7 normal-sized basins in rooms 11 and 20.

23)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None. P1 = small shield; P2 = Shield +3.

24)/Stairs up to level one/A/Shielded; Doors-(both) (S/N/H b). This is the same stairway as #19, level 1. Goes to #17, level 1.

25)/The Room of the Sword/A/Shielded; Door-(W/K/U). On the wall in this room rests a most wondrous weapon, a *Dancing Vorpall Blade*, with a permanent improved invisibility on itself (does not extend to wielder). It has no intelligence or ego and no other powers, other than the normal. There is a problem, however, in the fact that it will animate itself on the second round after the room is entered and attack the party that has entered as if it were a tenth-level Lord (invisibly) for 6 rounds. Then it will return to the wall to rest for 6 rounds before attacking again. (It does the 6-on, 6-off routine if possessed by a character, also, but in that case will fight as a normal dancing sword.) It is almost impossible to effectively combat the sword if you can't see it. If a character does grab it, it loses all malicious intent and becomes a normal (?) *Dancing Vorpall Blade*.

26)/Corridor/A/Shielded; Doors-N to 25 (W/K/U), E to 30 (WB/K/U). Trap = spikes from corners (2-16 pts. damage) triggered by stepping into their line of fire.

27)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-None.

28)/---/B/Non-shielded; Door-None.

29)/Tunnel to the Shunned Hills/A/(Shielded); Door-(S/N/H b). This is the start of tunnel C1 on Map A, eventually leading to the lair of the Troglodytes and their cave (entrance C, Map A).

30)/---/A/(Shielded); Door-(WB/K/U).

31)?---/A/Non-shielded; Door-(M/K/LK o). A is a statue of a hippo-god with ruby eyes worth 4,000 gp each (it is the same as and magically linked to B in room 32); however, if one eye is removed, 2 Type I Demons will appear and try to kill the thief; if 2 eyes are taken, 4 Type II Demons will appear; if 3 eyes are taken, 8 Type III Demons will appear; and if all 4 eyes are taken, 16 Type IV Demons will appear. The only way to get rid of the Demons is either to combat and defeat them or put *all* the eyes back, in which case all the demons will disappear. If the eyes are removed again, the process starts over again.

32)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-(S/N/U). Statue B has exactly the same properties as statue A in room 31. It also is a hippo-god.

33)/Ghost Room/A/Shielded; Doors-(S/N/U). This room contains the Pit's 4 Ghosts (60,45,72,53 HTK).

34)/---/A/Non-shielded; Door-None. This room contains one 73-hit-point Trapper.

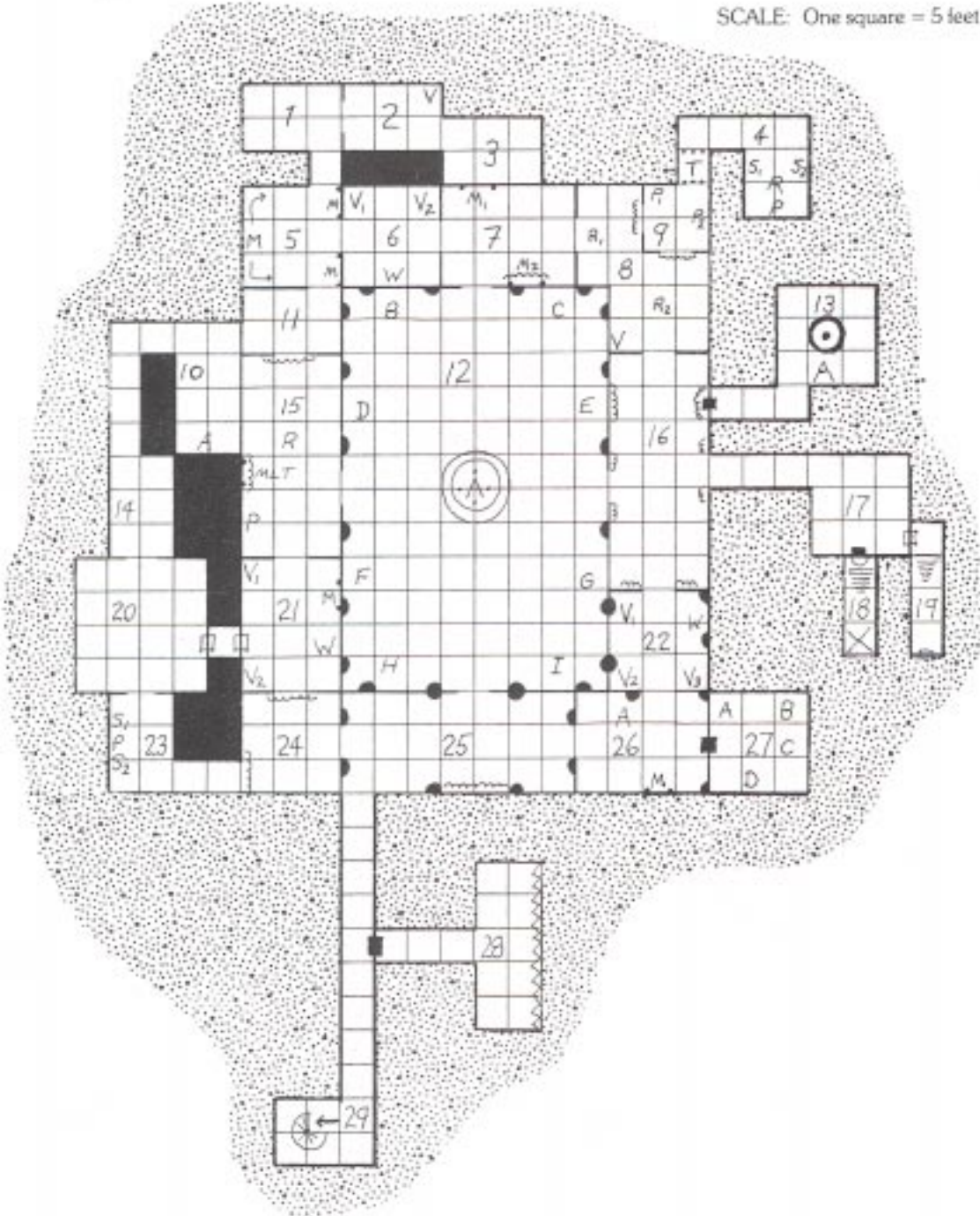
35)/The Enchanted Stairway/A/Non-shielded; Door-(M/K/LK i). If one goes up this stairway, after a long tiring climb one finds oneself in a 5'-by-5' room with a ladder leading to a trap door in the ceiling. A character who goes through the trap door finds himself on a platform apparently floating in the sky; a second later, the character will fall 10-60 feet and land on either of the points marked B on Map A, either into Loch Lakan or The Shunned Hills. Comrades who follow would see the first character as being on the platform, too, until they pass through to the platform, when they'd find themselves falling, too, though not necessarily to the same spot that the first character did. Going back down the Stairway doesn't work, for after one round of walking on the Stairway all directions lead to the platform anyway. Before that time, players may try to get back through the locked, reinforced steel door. (Remember to check for the monster if characters end up in the lake.)

36)/Stairway up to level one/A/Non-shielded; Door-None. Goes up to level 1, room 29.



Map B The Pit of the Oracle Level one

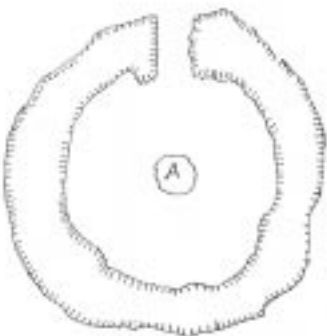
SCALE: One square = 5 feet



N ↑

- M = Mirror
- MLT = Mirror of Life Trapping
- P = Protection (armor or shield)
- R = Rug (10-120 gp value)
- S = Sword or other weapon
- T = Trap
- V = Vase (1-100 gp value)
- W = Wash Basin, 2-4 feet diameter, 40-110 gp value
- X = Pit

- Spiral staircase
- Linear staircase
- Curtain/tapestry (10-60 gp)
- Mirror
- Portcullis (2-12 pts. damage)
- Door
- Secret door
- One-way Door
- Pillars/columns

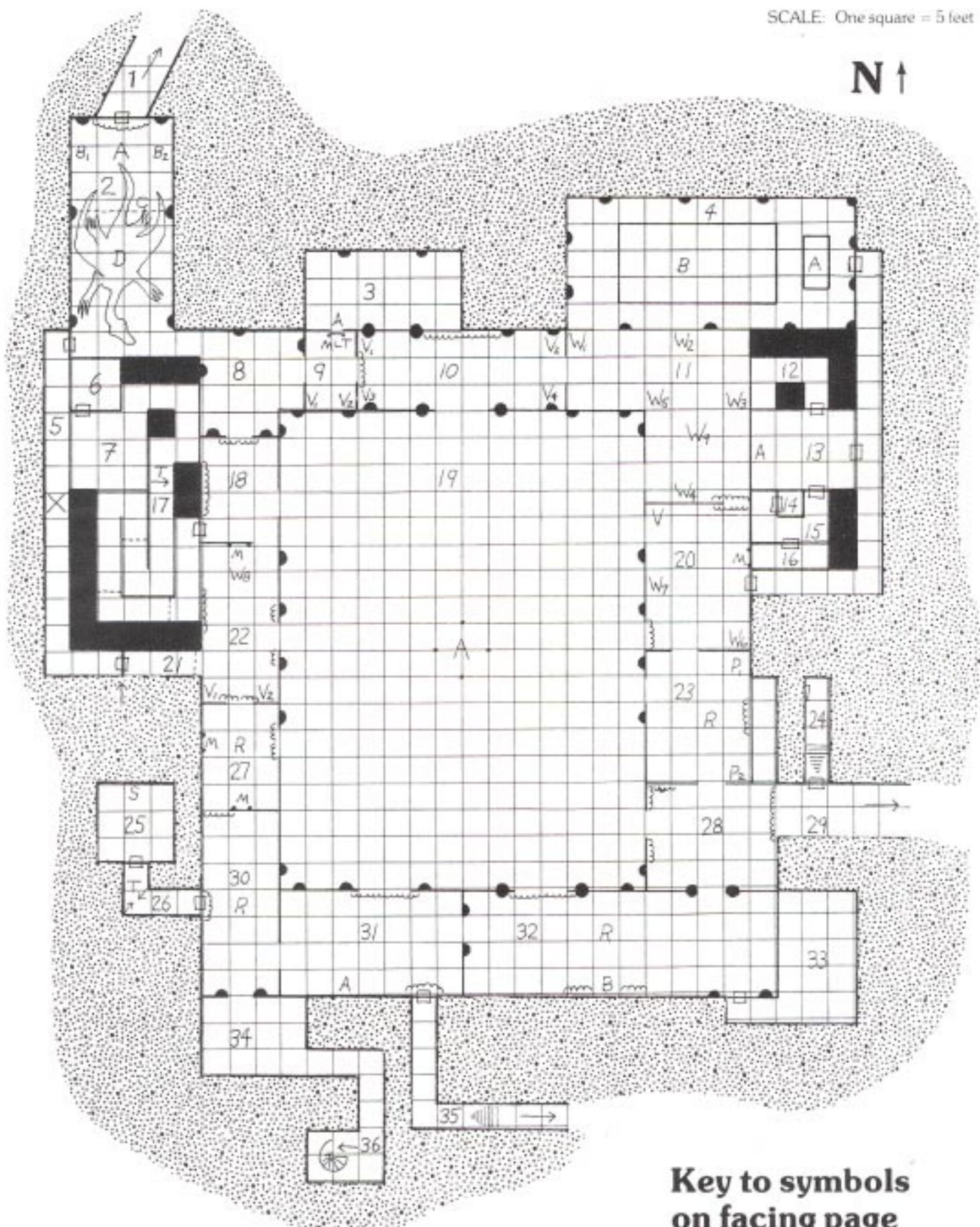


The Stone

Map C The Pit of the Oracle Level two

SCALE: One square = 5 feet

N ↑

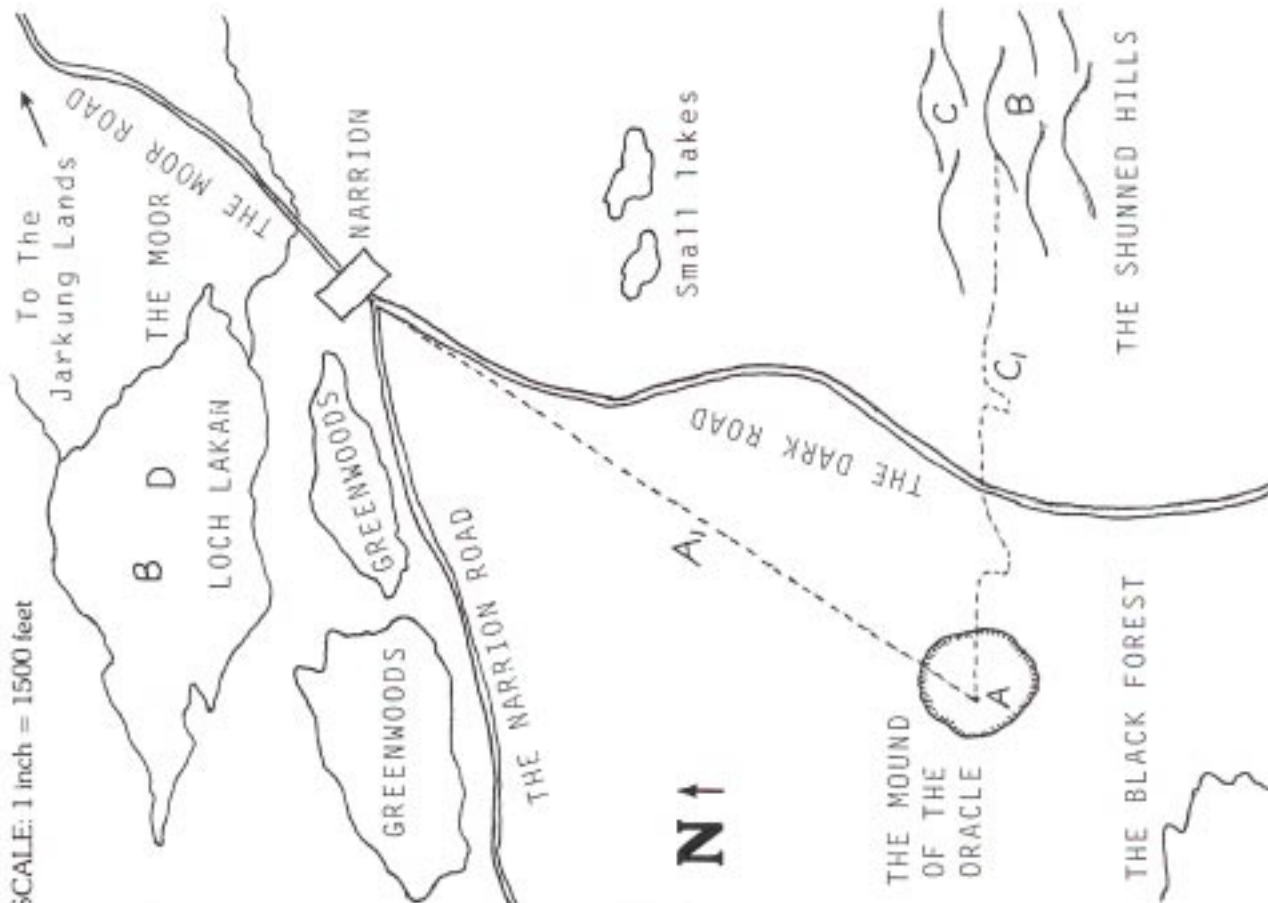


**Key to symbols
on facing page**

Map A

Narrion and surrounding area

SCALE: 1 inch = 1500 feet



Narrion city detail

SCALE: 1 inch = 250 feet



- A = The Stone of the Oracle
A1 = Secret passage of the Stalker from Level 2, room 1, to houses #20 and #27 in Narron detail
B = Points of exit from magical stairway, Level 2, room 35
C = Troglodyte cave entrance
C1 = Troglodyte tunnel leading from Level 2, room 29
D = Exit point on the bottom of Loch Lakan, leading from Level 1, room 18
E = Watch towers, manned by two men at all times
F = Gallows
G = Front gate
H = Moor gate